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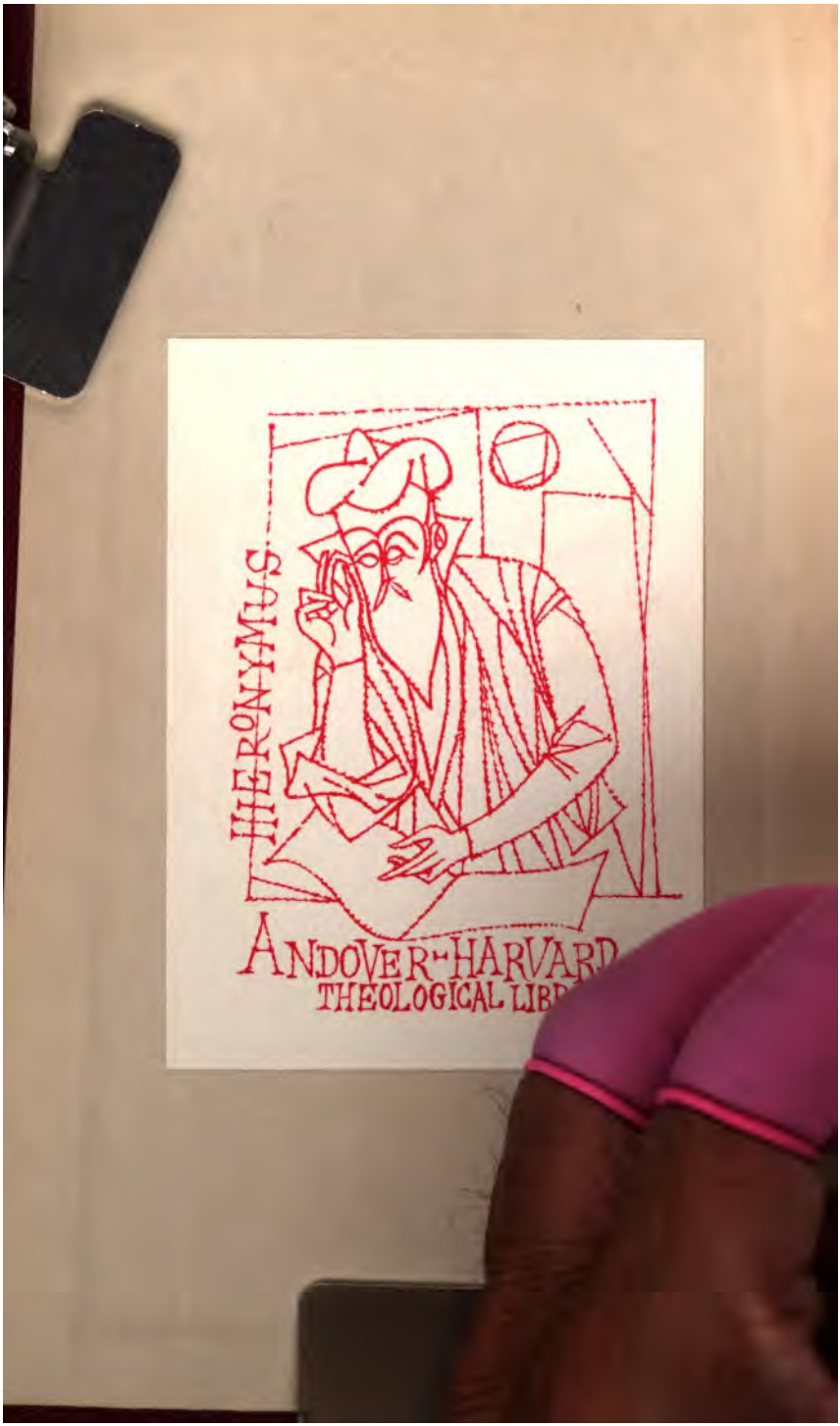
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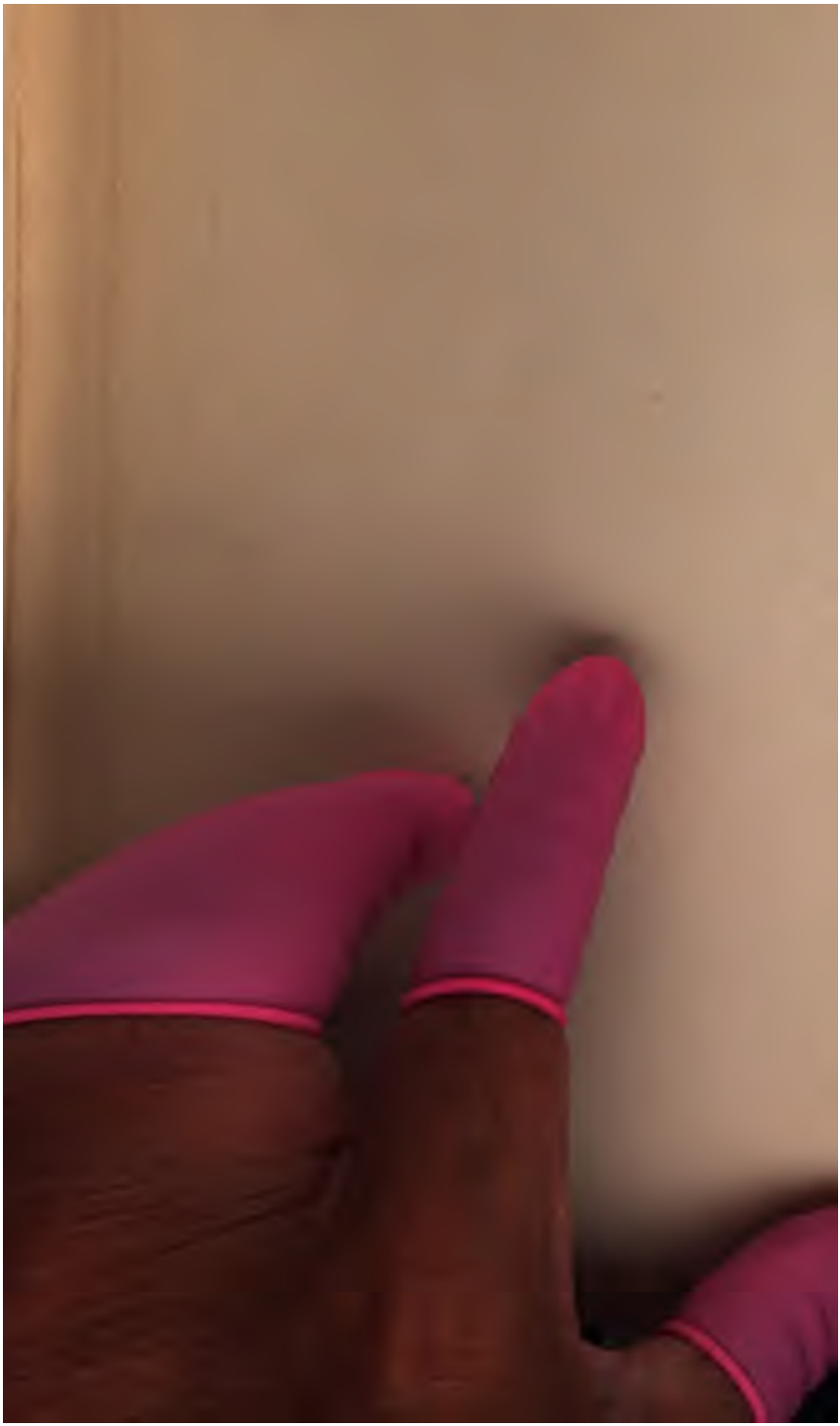

THE CHILD AND THE MAN,

OR

The Children, the Sabbath School, and the World.

BY

REV. CHARLES GREENWOOD.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

REV. E. N. KIRK.

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INTRODUCTION.

We know no lovelier object of vision than the face of a healthful child, just at the period when intelligence and affection begin to inspire its features.

The evil passions have, as yet, left no trace of their power upon it; care and anxiety have distorted no line of beauty; selfishness has given no repulsive expression to any movement of its delicate organs. But probably that peculiar loveliness of expression depends most upon simplicity of character, as contrasted with either complexity or duplicity.

The child has no excessive consciousness; no intense reflectiveness; both of which cause that shyness, embarrassment, diffidence, and the want of openness in the countenance so often seen in young persons. The heart at first plays freely within; and feeling gushes forth like a mountain rill, fearless and unconstrained. All that, however, is soon to be exchanged for the formal observance of rules and proprieties. Then if the man ever returns to this sim-

plicity, it will be by some kind of regeneration. He must be converted, to become as a little child in any thing that is desirable. If, for instance, he becomes a true orator, he must return to the same bold, unconscious utterance of his emotions. If he becomes a confirmed Christian, he must act out heavenly principles with the same spontaneity and freedom as a child. There are many orators who speak very correctly; but who never utter such music to the human soul, nor beam such thrilling glances as are heard and felt from the lips and eye of a little child. There is many a good man whose goodness puts him in a strait-jacket. It makes him stiff, and his friends uncomfortable. The difficulty lies here; while his principles govern him, they have not become a part of himself. But in a little child, every act and word is like the bursting forth of a flower; it is the result of life, not of reflection and rule. The child has no artificial manners resulting from rules not yet incorporated in the soul, but merely inscribed on its outer walls.

"I love it — I love it — the laugh of a child;
Now rippling and gentle, now merry and wild;
Ringing out on the air with its innocent gush,
Like the thrill of a bird at the twilight's soft hush, —
Floating up on the breeze like the tones of a bell,
Or the music that dwells in the heart of a shell.
O! the laugh of a child, so wild and so free,
Is the merriest sound in the world for me."

To the feeling thus described we could fully yield ourselves, were it not for the lesson we have learned from all our observation, confirmed by God's testimony, that selfishness is going to mar that simplicity; and sin, to turn that laughter to mourning. Our joy would be great, could we believe when we hear that merry laugh, either that sin or sorrow would never change that tone, or that death would never silence that voice.

But we have learned that children are not given to us as toys. They are not flowers sent from heaven merely to adorn our garden walks, and perfume the air of our dwellings, for a few days, and then to pass into non-existence. Within each one of those little frames dwells an immortal spirit; a subject of God's moral kingdom; a creature on probation for the destiny of hell or heaven. And on us, who once were children, devolves a weighty responsibility in regard to them. But that is fully and forcibly presented in the book before us. What our age needs, in this matter, is to feel that responsibility, and to form a higher estimate of childhood. Even a heathen poet could say: —

"Maxima debetur puero reverentia." *

One test of perfect manhood is, the estimate it

* The greatest reverence is due to childhood. — JUV. SAT. xiv. 44.

forms of childhood. When, on a certain occasion, children were brought to the Saviour by parents, impelled by the true instincts of parental love, they were repelled by the formalism and partially developed humanity of disciples yet in the transition process from Judaism to Christianity. He, who has identified his Deity with perfect manhood, cordially welcomed them; and in such a way as to show that it was a principle as well as a sentiment, which actuated him; for, he said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Neither the size of their bodies, the extent of their acquirements, nor the amount of their acquaintance with the world, are in any way, a hinderance to their entering into that kingdom, and sharing its blessings. They can comply with the conditions of entrance, and they can enjoy its privileges. More than that, the kingdom of heaven here on earth ought to be mainly composed of such.

The time is not long passed away, in which it was believed by pastors, parents, and people, that Christianity required either so much doctrinal knowledge at the outset, or so much stiffness and buckram, that little heads could not hold the due quantity of the one, nor little hands, feet, and tongues hold all the necessary starch of the other. That illusion is now vanishing from all minds; and we are expecting of pious children only children's piety. Depend upon it, a Christianity that does not look lovingly on children, is not the Christianity of Christ.

On another occasion, the Great Teacher preached a sermon, of which a child formed the subject, and the indispensableness of a return from our factitious manhood to some of our primitive dispositions, was the inference. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." It is not to the ignorance, nor selfishness, nor deceitfulness, nor the imagined religiousness of childhood we must return, but to its simplicity of character. By long processes of sinning we have become exceedingly artificial; and the result is, that we present more obstacles to the grace of God, the older we grow; so that children have fewer difficulties to overcome in entering the kingdom of God, than adults.

Why should any one doubt their adaptation to the kingdom of God? Is it their inability to form conceptions of spiritual subjects? That inability is imaginary. They have as definite conceptions of spiritual and invisible beings, as adults. They have the sentiments of moral approbation and disapprobation, and of responsibility, as perfectly at five years of age as at twenty. They can love and hate, repent and believe, praise, thank, and supplicate, just as sincerely as adults. The fact is, man's spiritual or religious development is his first mental development.

And when we shall come to believing that, and to a more earnest desire for the existence of infant piety, we shall see more of it. When parents, teachers, and pastors are willing to give themselves more laboriously and incessantly to the spiritual care of children, then the millennium shall be on its way to earth. When the hearts of the fathers shall be thus turned to the children, then the last of the ancient prophecies will receive its accomplishment, as a winding up of the whole prophetic drama.

And to this religious view it may be added, that civilization marches with education, side by side. And the kind of civilization depends on the kind of education. The Spartan education produced a patriotic and military people. But the thorough christianizing a nation will never take place, except under Christian instruction. And it becomes us seriously to inquire how the children of this nation are to receive such instruction. The common school, under free civil institutions, can probably never accomplish it. Colleges can be controlled by a thoroughly Christian influence; but they educate the few, not the many. Christian families have but a small portion of the youthful population within their circle. We must, then, look mainly to the pastor and the Sunday school teacher for this important result.

With these convictions, we cordially welcome the valuable discussion contained in this book; and

would merely add to it a suggestion to pastors. Which of this important body of men has sufficiently prized the trust committed to him? He can get the confidence and love of that part of his charge, to any extent, by manifesting an interest in them. And, from his position, he can do for their welfare and usefulness on earth, and their blessedness and glory in heaven, what no other person on earth, except their parents, can do. He can lead them into the Bible, and teach them to love it. He can start their minds on the course of doctrinal study. He can guard them against a thousand errors, prejudices, vain imaginations, illusions and difficulties, which embarrass, embitter, and often corrupt the soul in early childhood. Let a pastor undertake the work with this conviction: — I can facilitate the entrance of these my fellow-beings, at the very beginning of their existence, upon the path of divine knowledge. I can relieve them from many of the vain imaginations that injured my own character, and led me away from truth and God. I may, by God's blessing upon me and them, lead them into the path that goes to the cross.

E. N. KIRK.

Boston, *May*, 1855.

THE CHILD AND THE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE VALUE OF CHILDREN.

"Run, speak to this young man." — ZECH. ii. 4.

I PROPOSE to speak of children in their various relations; of the importance of that season which determines their character and destiny; of the value of the institutions which are adapted to them, especially the Sabbath School; and of the immense responsibility which this organization imposes upon all departments of society, in church and State.

First. The importance of children is apparent from their prospective relation to the world, in all its departments. The world is soon to be a conclusion, of which children are the premises; it will soon be a plentiful harvest, of which they are the prolific seed.

Children are a problem, of which the future history of the world will be but the solution; and the capacious temple of the coming world, embracing

all her wealth, intelligence, enterprise, and glory, is to be constituted of the present generations of childhood, in its foundation and materials.

The same is true of the future of every locality and association; they are to be effects, whose causes are traceable back in the main to their children. A celebrated queen once invited her royal guests to witness her jewels, and conducting them to a vast gathering of children, she remarked: "*These* are my jewels; these are the gems of my kingdom, and hope of my realm." A German schoolmaster once said, "Whenever I enter my school-room, I remove my hat, and bow with reverence, for there I meet the future dignitaries of my country."

If "men are but children of a larger growth," then children are men of a smaller growth, — they are the visible elements of the invisible hereafter; for hereafter is made up but of the elements of heretofore. Youth is the world's perspective totality, soon to be distributed to all her individuals, — here are the embodied, undeveloped virtues and vices of the coming generation, — here, as from the fabled box of Pandora, is soon to issue universal good and evil, — here is the great treasure-house, the vast though unseen resources of the world, — here are the hands that are to construct, and the hands that are to destroy; the hearts that are to pulsate with the power of truth, and those whose element will be darkness.

Augustine said, "Adam, though one, was all men." In him was seminally contained the history of the world. So, in the little child, seminally exist the elements of the adult man; it is the folio of a

man in a single letter. And children are the budding of the world's harvest, the fountain of her issues, the stepping-stone of her edifice.

From the ranks of the young — as the oaken forests from the acorns — is soon to step forth the world; in all its moral aspects and conditions, its gradations of society, its departments of professions, business, science, arts, and enterprise, its weal and its woe. And as is the relation of the child to the parent, so is the relation of the children of each society and organization, each town, State, and nation, to their respective societies and localities; and as the eye and heart of each father and mother rest upon their darling child, so should the hope of each department of society rest upon its children.

The remark of a celebrated one, so oft repeated, "I am the State," is true of the young, and of each youth; in an important sense, he is the State; his mind is a kingdom; his sphere is a royal realm; the care of his virtues is a regal charge; his perfection is a kingdom's glory, his perversion is a kingdom's overthrow. In every child, though marred, we behold the image of the Creator; the germ of a being who is to survive the wreck of matter, the war of elements, and the crash of worlds; the sunrise of a never-ending existence. Some one says of an infant whose countenance seemed strikingly intelligent and thoughtful, "I cannot play the fool with that babe; its look fills me with respect."

Such ought to be our impressions whenever we look upon an immortal creature, let its outward condition be what it may. The seal of immortality

which is on its brow, should insure it respect from all who are themselves immortal. Another said, he could never paint the face of a child, for it reminded him so much of heaven. That little lump of animated clay, which we look upon and recognize as a child, is of transcendent worth; he is an immortal being; rational, sensitive, capable of happiness — immense, divine happiness — of sorrow extreme and eternal; and must climb from height to height in one, or plunge from depth to depth in the other.

Just throw the mind back, and contemplate that epoch, when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. What was the occasion? Why, that earth was started on its course of years, an inanimate orb, to revolve for a certain period amid other orbs. And yet there was so much of grandeur, importance, and interest in that event, that those who beheld it broke out into singing, and hymned the loud anthem of awakened joy.

But what is the comparative importance of the creation of a world, to the setting forth of an immortal spirit on its course of endless destiny; its axis, intelligence; its orbit, eternity; its attractive centre, the throne of God; its atmosphere, Divine love; and its destiny, the boundlessness of immortality?

Children are not merely flowers, blossoms, dewdrops, and playthings; for of such are earth and the kingdom of heaven. Flowers! they are the flowers of the invisible world — indestructible, self-perpetuating flowers — with each a multitude of angelic and evil spirits underneath its leaves, toiling and

wrestling for dominion over it. Blossoms! they are the blossoms of another world, whose fruitage is angels and archangels. Or dewdrops! they are dewdrops that have their source, not in the chambers of the earth, nor among the vapors of the sky, which the next breath of winter, the next flash of sunshine may dry up forever, but among the everlasting fountains and inexhaustible reservoirs of mercy and love. Playthings! soon to become the players themselves. Of such is earth, with all its nations, empires, kingdoms, and republics; and such the kingdom of heaven, with all its principalities and powers, its hierarchies, dominions, thrones. Children are oceans in drops, eternity in frailty; the stoutest heart shudders and shrinks at the thought. "Run, speak to" such; commit to them weighty messages, for they will respond erelong.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEASON OF YOUTH.

THE importance of the season of youth will appear, when we consider it is the time which determines the character of manhood, and of the world. The constituents of the premises are the basis of the conclusion; the occasion which bends the twig, is the occasion which inclines the tree; the influences that form the cause, are the influences which determine the effect. Childhood is, therefore, the basis of manhood. "Tell me," says Burke," "what are the prevailing principles of your young men, and I will tell you what is to be the character of the next generation." The great discovery has been thoroughly and universally made, that infancy and youth are the periods in which the characters of men and of communities are formed; and this is a circumstance which gives to first influences and instructions momentous and paramount importance; the fact these early influences determine almost to a certainty, the character of those who are to act with a governing power on the soul throughout eternity.

The problem, What is to be the eternal character of the soul, is generally solved during the first stage of life. This is a period when the mind is in a forming state; when good and evil, right and wrong,

virtue and vice, holiness and sin, all moral beauty and loveliness, and all moral deformity and odiousness, present themselves to the soul as petitioners for its attention, its confidence, and its submission; and when either consciously or unconsciously, either directly or indirectly, the soul answers unalterably the great question, to which body of influences it will yield, under the guidance of which it will place itself, and by whose plastic hand it will be moulded, shaped, and fashioned *forever*, either into ever-growing moral excellence, or into ever-increasing moral debasement. Then the material is soft, and poured into the mould, takes its shape. Then is the delicate and deciding period, when, says Dr. Paley, life takes "a holding turn." The problem of the soul's condition is, indeed, sometimes kept for a long period unsolved. It may possibly receive its solution even amidst the grey hairs, and under the almost palsied energies of old age. This, however, is a result rare as "angel's visits," to our earth; it is the *exception* of human experience. In almost all cases the mystic process which elaborates and finally brings out the answer to the great question before us, is carried on within the circle which circumscribes our *youth;* amidst the tender, impressible, and yielding sensibilities of the fresh, dewy morning of life. Then, almost uniformly, *tendencies* are impressed, trains of *causes* started, and *directions* to the character given, which draw after them a perpetual likeness of consequences and effects. Youth is emphatically the laboratory of character; and the influences which reach it, are either the sacred or the malign chem-

istry which combine its elements, and prepare them for all future development, activity, and growth.

Says a Sabbath School Report, "much the largest part of the people over sixteen years of age, are in no sense or degree the subject of parental or pastoral instruction. Of those who attend public worship, by far the greater part fail to become professors of religion. It is chiefly from among those who have been religiously instructed in childhood and youth, that a great majority of the stated attendance on public worship are drawn; it is from among these, that by far the largest part of the professed followers of Christ are drawn. And every revolving year strengthens our conviction, that if elementary religious truth is to be imprinted ineffaceably upon the human mind, the work must be done on the susceptible and yielding surface of infant hearts, by the hand of Christian faithfulness and love." Yes, if they are to fear, love, and obey God, and "grow up into Christ, their living head, in all things," they must be taught to bow the *pliant* knee, and offer up the *infant* heart at his altar. "I will confess," says a subject of a European despot, "that I look to the moral, religious, and intellectual education received at such institutions as infant schools, for the regeneration of my country." *Public opinion is formed by influences upon childhood.* Says Calvin, "If we would have the church prosper, we must begin in the good instruction of the young." Then the heart is comparatively ignorant of sin; then prejudice has not warped the judgment; selfishness has not stultified the conscience; impure appetites and

passions have not blunted the sensibilities, and vicious habit has not established its iron dominion over the soul. Then, too, there lingers, from Adam's fall, a desire to receive religious instruction, and a power to retain it, which is seldom found in maturer years.

Then the hinderances from within, which are more formidable than those from without, are comparatively nothing in childhood. God has wonderfully guarded the infant mind in two ways. He has given it a sensibility to be approached and influenced by truth; and he has held back, till almost the age of manhood, the development of those passions which hinder the influence of the Gospel.

The profoundest principles of Christianity are wrapped up in simple precepts. Truth is simple, and, like minute dewdrops, it can penetrate through the fine network of the infant intellect, and trickle down upon the heart! But error is complex. Religious error is made up of falsehood and truth concatenated. This chainwork is too large to be admitted into the infant mind. The powers have not vigor enough to grasp the propositions which contain plausible and poisonous heresy. We do not forget that the young mind is depraved, and entirely destitute of holiness, only as it shall be produced by the divine spirit through gospel truth. But it is no small advantage to approach the mind, while God is by his constitution guarding it against error, and making it susceptible to the approaches of truth.

Then, the worst passions are held back till you can do your work. Scepticism never rises till the manly powers begin to awake, and the pride of knowledge, and contempt for old opinions have filled

the youthful mind with a green and self-conceited wisdom. Avarice has nothing to do with childhood. It springs up only when the mind begins to look forward to the whole of life, and form lengthened schemes for self-aggrandizement. So, also, those passions which lead to licentiousness in its various forms, are undeveloped till a maturer period of life. Before these mighty powers of mischief are aroused, pure publications may come into the mind unopposed.

The mind, during the period of childhood, may be well represented by our Saviour's description of a man when the evil spirit had temporarily gone out of him. There stands the house, empty, swept, and garnished. You may go in unresisted, and find, in the quiet dormitories, the young passions lying in unconscious slumber. You may bind them hand and foot, with the silken bands of gospel instruction; then, when these passions arouse themselves, and in the first impulse of the pride of conscious strength, exclaim, "Let us break their bands in sunder, and cast away their cords from us!" behold, they are fettered; and thus those passions are held in check, and the gospel has a free passage into the mind secured for it as long as life shall last. The most powerful influences are generally characterized by two things, *quietness* and *constancy*. Look at it in gravitation. Here is a power that operates so noiselessly, that few persons have their minds drawn towards it once in a year; and yet it retains the mountains on their basis, and the oceans in their beds; and regulates our very walking, and all our motions and labors. So it is, also, with the

dew-fall, it comes down like millions of angels alighting upon every part of our land with noiseless footsteps. It comes in the night, and continues its visits of mercy with every returning evening. To a thoughtless world it seems to do nothing, yet it clothes all our valleys with verdure, and our hillsides with corn, and continues the growth of our forests, and causes them to shake like Lebanon.

Analogous to these great, quiet, constant operations of God, are the operations of early education. Many scarcely see their action at all; and none of us can conceive of the greatness of the results which they are achieving. In the process of quarrying from beds of rocks, the quarryman surveys the mountain ledge, selects the most eligible spot, and deposits deeply, amid its vast strata, the explosive agent. No outward development appears; no rocks are thrown from their beds; no stones are seen flying in the air, and superficial observers would pronounce the whole labor in vain. But, returning from the spot, from the point of the blast we may trace seams and crevices in the rock, and diverging in all directions through its strata. This *sand-blast* precedes the transformation of the ledge or the mountain into adamantine cities. It prepares the way for all the detailed labor of quarrying, shaping, polishing, and erecting into forms of beauty and utility; and blasters, pursuing their labor, ever and anon fall upon new shakes or crevices covered by rubbish, which it had opened, diverging and extending through the rocky bed, guiding all their blows, and giving success to all their toils! Thus it is with the influence exerted by early religious institutions,

especially the Sabbath school; though to superficial observers the effect of this organization may appear small, yet it is the *sand-blast* of the religious enterprise. In its primary action, it is seaming up the rocky heart of human society, far out to its extremities, and down through its lowest strata. And all the coworkers of this great enterprise are quarrying along the seams it has left, now and then falling upon new crevices long concealed by the rubbish of the world, that guide all their detailed labors, and give success to all their various means.

To it, the church is indebted for the greater number and better qualifications of missionaries she is sending far hence to the Gentiles; for the increase and greater efficiency of the ministry now occupying her pulpits; for the greater ability and faithfulness of those who bear her offices of charity, supervision, and diseipline, and for a better indoctrinated, more efficient, and more elevated laity, "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The great evangelical enterprises of the present day have to do chiefly with the adult, — the full-grown man; stern, strong, stubborn, and impracticable in his passions, habits, and opinions. The work of the Sabbath school is chiefly with the *child;* tender, yielding, impressible, comparatively innocent and unhardened, just ready to take any shape or mould we choose to give it. To make those who have long been accustomed to do evil, learn to do well, — to change the Ethiopian's skin, to wash out the leopard's spots, — this is the task proposed by those other modes of evangelical efforts. But hard and wellnigh hopeless as the attempt is,

the church acts wisely to bend her energies and lavish her thousands for its accomplishment. But is she equally wise when she forgets that after all, "the child is father of the man?"

Might not a part of the labor wasted in vain efforts to straighten out the old, gnarled, crooked, hidebound deformity of the forest or field, be more profitably spent in guiding and training the graceful young sapling; which, as it is "swayed by summer's slightest breath," bends lovingly and wooingly towards us, as though it would invite us to do it? There was pith and wisdom in the remark made by one of the fathers in the ministry: "Take care of the children, and adults will take care of themselves!" but the church has not yet fully learned this wisdom, for she still continues to pay out hundreds of dollars to convert the adult, for every dollar that she gives to save the child.

It is a true saying, "We pay much attention to the youth, the middle-aged, and the old, while we pay too little regard to the child in the cradle. Instead of giving fifty dollars to the Bible or tract societies, and five to the school society, the order should be reversed; the pounds should be expended on the children, and the pennies on the men." This being done, the penny will do for a man what a pound will not do for him now. The minister of the gospel tills a soil often rugged and barren; the Sunday school teacher cultivates a virgin and fruitful mould. Adults forget the events of yesterday, but the scenes and lessons of childhood are ever green in our memory. How important, then, that those impressions which are indelible

should be right, and be made before evil principles have gained a lodgement in the mind! The child is the miniature man; and if we would bless his manhood, we must begin where the Sunday school begins — with his childhood; we must rightly cultivate his mind and heart, and direct all his incipient energies to the practice of true virtue, that custom may make it habitual, easy, and delightful. "An attempt to tame all the beasts of savage name that couch in the dens, or howl in the mountains of the earth by changing their mature nature, would mock the fancy of the most visionary." There are no adequate means; but before their instincts of timidity and cruelty are developed, and their habits of rapacity formed, we *can conceive* of their being tamed; for "every kind of beast has been tamed, and may be tamed of mankind." The lion and the lamb may be made to lie down together, and a child lead them; and nothing remain to hurt or harm in all God's holy mountain. An attempt to reverse the course of all rivers, by turning back their streams over the hills, after they have descended half-way to the valleys; or directing them through the banks of ravines between which they are flowing, would be preposterous.

But we *can conceive* of at least an approximation to this end, by the direction of sufficient agencies near the sources where they bubble from the earth, and descend from summits and highlands, marking the surface of the earth with the channels of a new system of waters. An attempt to re-shape the whole vegetable kingdom by straightening the crooked trunks of the monarchs of the wood, bending ill-

shapen branches, and severing unsightly limbs, would not surely be made by the wildest projector; there are no means adequate to such a mode of effecting the object.

But we *can conceive* of this vast accomplishment, by the tasteful care and systematic agency of successive generations in removing obstructions from the face of the earth, adjusting the early shoots, and bending the pliant twigs of springing gardens, fields, and forests, giving new order and beauty to the whole vegetable kingdom. The spiritual transformation of the world, as a work of instrumentality, appears infinitely greater than any or all of these supposed physical enterprises combined, — a work of exalting and bringing low, turning and overturning, creating and destroying, till Christ reigns over all the earth. An attempt to accomplish this vast work by any system of mere adult proselytism, apparently the chief reliance of the great body of evangelical Christians, must fail. Were meeting-houses multiplied a hundred-fold, and men as holy as Paul, and as eloquent as Apollos, preaching in them to adult congregations, and going from house to house warning men and women with tears, the work would be still unaccomplished. Ranks of sinners press on to fill up the places of the converted, and generations of wicked are springing up in place of the departed righteous, and in the nature of the means, to whatever extent enlarged, the end will never be attained. But there is an order of instrumentalities through which we can conceive of this vast accomplishment. We mean that which is involved in the Sabbath

school institution. Preaching the Cross! Yes, it is by the Cross that all things must be subdued to Christ. But preaching the Cross to the young; bringing the generations of the earth to the foot of the Cross, before depravity is developed in its most gigantic forms, and in its most rampant madness; turning the streams of human life and passion into the channels of righteousness and holiness, near their fountains, before they become enlarged and impetuous in their course; shaping characters, manners, and institutions upon the models of the Gospel; not by hewing, trimming, and reshaping the manhood of society, but by adjusting the early shoots, and bending the pliant twigs of its infancy.

Missionaries and missionary boards, feel more and more the comparatively greater efficiency of the labors expended upon the rising generation of heathen, and begin to recognize the chief hope of the church in the conversion of those taught the way of life from childhood, rising up as native preachers. And the designed preëminence of this instrumentality in the conversion of Christendom, is increasingly felt by the most intelligent and judicious Christians. By the hand of the Sunday school, the leaven of the Gospel may be deposited deeply in the heart of society, till in its outward development the world is purified and Christianized.

Upon the principle of this institution as a pivot, the Christian Archimedes may confidently rest the lever of the Gospel in aiming to overturn the moral world. Here we must expect greater things and attempt greater things. Here, relying upon the

divine blessing, as in the Thermopylæ of the moral world, we may forestall and beat back intemperance, Romanism, infidelity, profaneness, licentiousness, Sabbath breaking; until, as the harbinger of Christ's reign on earth, the Sunday school institution shall have prepared the way of the Lord, and made his paths straight; — until, as the Star of Bethlehem, it shall lead inquiring generations, and stand over the Messiah, till all shall come and worship him together; and one song employ all nations, and children's voices of all lands sweetly blend in the heavenly chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to redeem us."

It was said by a clerical orator, on a public occasion of much interest in a neighboring city, that "if the base of the pyramid is clay, it is of little purpose that you build its apex of precious stones. In all exertions for the public weal," continues the orator, "we must look out for the foundation. We must see to it, that the power lies among the masses." And certain it is, the power will lie among the masses, do what we may. What we are to see to is, that lying there, as a matter of course, it is not left uninformed and unsanctified, to be perverted by knavish demagogues and duped by crafty priests.

The work of the Sabbath school is eminently "at the base of the pyramid." When it shows itself at all, it shows itself among the "masses." So far as its legitimate agency is felt, it infuses into the "masses" a consciousness of their powers, of their rights, and of their responsibilities. Let every American child have a seasonable and thorough training in a good Sabbath school, and our states-

men and orators may go to sleep without any misgivings as to that portion of the "base of the pyramid" that extends over our continent. Give us the sun, and it will shine, spite of all the mists and fogs that gather round it.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY EDUCATION.

The history of individuals and of nations demonstrates, that early education gives character to both, whether in the Christian or pagan world. The Jews, having the law of Moses, were to teach its precepts diligently to their children; by talking of them when they sat in their houses, and when they walked by the way, when they lay down, and when they arose; they were to bind them for a sign upon their hands, and as frontlets between their eyes; they were to write them upon the posts of their houses and upon their gates, "that the generations to come might know them, even the children that should be born: who should arise and declare them to *their* children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Hence a reverence for the Law of Moses has ever characterized that nation, even (by perversion) to the rejection of Christ, his gospel, and his salvation. With the American people, "liberty and equality" are cradle matters. They are taught from early childhood to celebrate the birthday of these rights, and to look contemptuously upon tyranny and oppression, — hence the love of freedom is characteristic of the nation. The Romans trained their children for *war*.

It is said the mothers fed their infant sons the first time with the sword, each calling upon all her gods to grant that when that son died, it might be upon the tented field, with the clash of arms, the roar of battle, and the shout of victory for his requiem. Hence the characteristic of that nation was a fondness for the camp, for the armor, and for conflict. The Athenians early consecrated their children to learning, making them devotees of the goddess of Wisdom; hence a love for literature and science has ever characterized the nation. Athens has been denominated the "cradle of science." The Spartans dedicated their children to the State, and from earliest infancy trained them for its defence. It was customary after their public dinners for the old men to discourse upon the affairs of the State. The conversation turned generally upon the history of the country, upon the virtues of its great men who had distinguished themselves either upon their valor in war, or their wisdom in the art of government. And the youth who were present at these entertainments, were exhorted to propose such to themselves as their models for the forming of their manners and the regulation of their conduct. The first and most inviolable law taught them respecting war was, never to fly or turn their backs, whatever superiority of numbers the enemy's army might possess; never to quit their posts; never to deliver up their arms; in a word, either to conquer or to die. Their maxim was to "return either with or upon their shield." Hence generation after generation of hardy soldiers grew up and made their little city mistress of all Greece, and irresistible to the powers that surrounded them. It

was related by Missionary Williams, that the mother in the South Sea Islands, even before a child was born, used to go to the temple with the requisite offering, where the priest performed the ceremony of infusing "the spirit of the god" into the child. After its birth the same rite was repeated. The same writer tells us that the mothers in New Zealand used to thrust little gravel stones down the throats of their children, to give them hard hearts, and to make them dauntless warriors. The mothers of the Belaric Isles place their children's bread upon a high pole, and forbid them to taste until they shall hit it with their slings; they therefore grow up generations of sciened slingers.

We are informed of another people whose mothers require their children to climb up certain lofty and rugged ascents, and falling down, there repeat over and over again the name of their God. As the worshippers of Juggernaut are drawing along the idol car bearing the god whom they worship, whilst others are offering themselves as a sacrifice, by throwing their bodies beneath its heavy wheels, the heathen mother with the infant in her arms, places its tender hands upon the ropes; thus early seeking to produce impressions of duty to worship *his mother's god.* Idolaters require their children to gather the fagots for the idol sacrifice, to participate in the service of the gods, to inhale the spirit and faith of the idol, that their minds are early filled and impressed with the airs, feelings, and conduct of idolatry. And the worshippers of all heathen nations possess similar traits of character to those which they ascribe to their respective deities.

Lycurgus, a Spartan lawgiver and governor, ordered that the chief attention of the nation be directed to the training of the children, and that there should be no written laws except such as were early imprinted upon the hearts of the children. For what he thought most conducive to the virtue and happiness of a city, were *principles* interwoven with the manners and breeding of the people. These would remain immovable, as founded in inclination, and be the strongest and most lasting tie; and the habits which education produced in the youth, would answer in each the purpose of a lawgiver.

Aristotle, a Grecian philosopher, ordered that the artists should paint or represent nothing in the temple, in sight of the children, but what was pure and beautiful; that they should read nothing in their hearing which was immoral, lest the youth be corrupted; for this would destroy the nation. From infancy they were to see or hear nothing which was calculated to produce disrespect or disbelief for the gods; for this would overthrow their religion. He believed the prerogative of man consists in that he is able to discern and apprehend something "that is higher and better than himself." And whatever he may become, is effected by the combined influence of nature, habit, and instruction. The last two elements together constituting education.

Why does the Roman Catholic cleave to the tradition of their elders, recognizing the divinity of the priest and the infallibility of the pope, maliciously hating and studiously avoiding all other sects? It is because he first drank at the fount of tradition, and early learned to cherish a spirit of sectarianism

and hostility, and to tremble at the tremendous names, "*Priest*" and "*Pope!*"

It is the force of education which induces the Hottentot to live and riot in his filth; and the red man of our western wilds to cling to his bow and arrow, wigwam and hunting ground. The Mohammedan is taught from a child to despise swine's flesh. It is therefore said if a piece is thrown into his boat, in mature years, he will leap overboard into the sea. We are told that Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general, was led, when a child, to the altar of his father, and made to swear eternal hostility to Rome; he consequently became the most formidable enemy the Romans ever had.

It is said of Socrates, the greatest master of ancient Greece, that he saw, in a dream, a beautiful white swan flying towards him from the altar of Venus, and lighting in his lap. In a little time, the bird spread its wings again, and, rising into the air, went up, up, till it disappeared in the clear sky. The next day, while relating his dream to his pupils, Aristo came leading to him his son Plato. Socrates fixed his eyes upon the lad, surveyed his broad, high forehead, and looked into his deep, clear eye, and exclaimed, "Behold the swan of my school!" He trained the boy with parental pride and parental hopes; and the swan of his school became the noblest mind in the literature of his country, and has, perhaps, impressed its influence more sensibly upon the Christian ages than any other uninspired intellect.

The devoted mother of John Quincy Adams, not only laid in her son the foundation of character

which made him one of the most intellectual men of the race, but she instilled into his young soul the conviction, and caused him to cultivate the practice of duties, from which neither age nor place ever deterred him. He remarked, near the close of life, he did not recollect that he had ever gone to rest without prayer, — usually concluding with the simple petition taught him in infancy. And the great man once paid the following tribute to his mother: "It is due to gratitude and nature that I should acknowledge and avow that, such as I have been, whatever it was, such as I am, whatever it is, and such as I hope to be in all futurity, must be ascribed, under Providence, to the precepts and example of my mother." And upon his tombstone is written: "A son, worthy of his father; a citizen, shedding glory on his country; a scholar, ambitious to advance mankind; and a Christian, walking humbly in the sight of his God."

Benjamin Franklin attributed much of his practicable turn of mind — which was the salient point of his immortality — to the fact that his father, in his conversation before the family "always discussed some subject, or developed some just principle of individual or social action, instead of talking forever about trout-catching, grouse-shooting; about dogs, dinners, dice, or trumps."

John Randolph assigned as a sufficient reason why he could not be an atheist, the fact that in early childhood he was taught to kneel at his mother's knee and say, "Our Father which art in heaven."

George Washington, of unswerving integrity and unprecedented honor, "must have made up his mind,

somewhere between his cradle and his teens, that he would never tell a lie." It was at this age he laid the foundation of that candor and integrity, that generous public spirit and lofty patriotism, which placed him at the helm of our liberty's bark, and guided him in triumph to the haven of Independence.

Daniel Webster, the great expounder of the Constitution and defender of the Declaration, is said to have learned many of their sublime precepts from his cotton handkerchief, when a boy he lay upon the hearth before the generous fire.

Dr. Doddridge learned from his mother while an infant, before he was able to read, the history of the Old and New Testaments, the rudiments of that knowledge which is developed in his works, by the assistance of some Dutch tiles in the chimney of the room where they commonly sat; and her wise and pious reflections upon the stories they represented, were the means of making some good impressions upon his heart, which never wore out; the thoughts dropped on his heart, thirty or forty years before, arose at length to his mind in all their vividness, strength, and freshness, and shed their baptism upon his intellect. Said the Hon. Mr. Frelinghuysen, "I trace the causes under God, to a mother's faithfulness to my childhood. Yes," said he, "the taking of my little hand within hers, I can almost feel it still, as she led me to the closet, where she poured out her soul for my salvation; the sound of that dear voice as I would pass her chamber door, as she wrestled with the God of Jacob for her child." "These — these," said he, "I mark as among the

effective means by which the God of mercy led my soul to himself."

The greatest general that ever swayed a sceptre over the destinies of nations, was wont with his school-boys, to brandish the glittering sword, to marshal armies, plan attacks, fight battles, and gain victories. He was remarkably fond of reading the battles of Homer, and once wrote to his mother, "with my sword by my side and Homer in my pocket, I will carve my way through the world." And he whose commanding voice is heard at sea, amid the roar of elements, above the ocean's storm, is generally he whose foot trod the tottering deck in the days of boyhood, whose youthful hammock swung in the breeze, who loved in childhood to play on the wave-washed beach, to see the ocean foam and hear its roar. Those who occupy the dizzy heights of power, and bear the reins of State, whose voices are heard in the halls of legislation and give tone to the world, are such as are early trained to habits of loyalty and obedience. And those who have left the earth at will, soared aloft and read the glorious visions of the skies, giving the names, number, magnitude, and phenomena, of the heavenly bodies, listening intelligently to the music of the rolling spheres, and gazing far off into the awful heights of deity, have been such as early learned that "stars teach as well as shine," and whose youthful eyes read a lesson in the "stellar alphabet," which was unintelligible to a thoughtless world. Those who have stood highest and firmest on Zion's walls, been able to "feed the church of God," "draw water from the wells of salvation," and blow the

silver trumpet of the gospel, in the fullest, sweetest, richest notes, have generally been those who "Remembered their Creator in the days of their youth."

Youth is the time to study, the time to learn, the time to love, the time to enjoy, the time to improve, the time for every thing. Not only does the history of the world demonstrate that early education gives character and destiny to all people, but every nation and religious creed, has found it indispensable, for the perpetuity of their own existence, to teach their principles to their children; and without it neither Church nor State could be preserved in their present forms.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY EDUCATION CONTINUED.

Among the principal reasons of the Puritans for leaving Holland; — where they had sojourned for nine or ten years after their memorable flight from England, — was the desire to be in a condition for the correct education of their children. They sought not merely "freedom to worship God" for themselves, and in their own way, but they sought opportunity to train up a generation for God and humanity. In the words of their memorialist, as received by him from their own lips, "they foresaw that Holland would be no place for their church and posterity to continue in comfortably, because they could not bring the Dutch to reform the neglect of observation of the Lord's day as a Sabbath; and because, also, — which was very lamentable, and of all sorrows the most heavy to be borne, — many of their children were drawn away by evil examples into extravagant and dangerous courses, and they could not *educate* them, nor give them due correction, without reproof or reproach by their neighbors." The education of their children, therefore, was one of the principal motives which brought the "Pilgrim Fathers" to this retreat. And this duty was promptly and faithfully performed. They built school-houses,

founded colleges, and erected churches, to which they introduced their children; they laid broad and deep in their hearts the foundations of an enlightened and expansive social, civil, and religious superstructure. And behold their progeny! "As the sands upon the sea-shore, and as the stars of heaven for multitude;" in the enjoyment of all those privileges and blessings which were sought for them "thus afar," and purchased for them thus dear.

The devotees of evangelical Christianity are to teach diligently the divine precepts to their children, to "train them up in the way they should go, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" thus instrumentally imparting their faith to their offspring. We therefore find a very large proportion of the converts of saving grace to be *young* persons, the children of *believers*, and of *such* believers as early consecrate their children to God. It was ascertained not long since concerning five hundred and seven students, residing at six of the principal theological seminaries in this country, (of three different denominations,) that three hundred and thirteen were instructed in the Sabbath school, and that the average age of the whole at the time of conversion was a fraction over sixteen years. And in relation to fifty young men in one of these seminaries, it is asserted that thirty-eight, or nearly four fifths, became converts under Sabbath school instruction.

In a neighboring town, within the space of forty years, there were admitted into the church five hundred persons; of this number more than four hundred and fifty were the children of pious parents, and consecrated to God in infancy.

A minister states that he recently had the pleasure of hearing addresses from three missionaries, who had proclaimed the gospel on *three continents of our globe:* one among the Pawnees, one in Africa, and the other in Mosul, near the ruins of ancient Nineveh, where Jonah refused to preach. He had also taught on Mount Lebanon, and his feet had stood on Mount Zion. These were all converted in the Sunday school when little children.*

The European churches, generally, regard Christian piety more as a habit of life, formed under the training of childhood, and less as a marked spiritual change in experience.

The Moravian Brethren, it is agreed by all, give a ripe and graceful exhibition of piety; and it is the radical distinction of their system, that it rests its power on Christian education. They make their churches schools of holy nurture to childhood, and expect their children to grow up there as plants in the house of the Lord. Accordingly, it is affirmed that not one in ten of the members of that church recollect any time when he began to be religious. Baxter was at one time greatly troubled concerning himself, because he could recollect no time when there was a gracious change in his character. But he discovered at length, that "Education is as properly a means of grace as preaching;" and thus found the sweeter comfort in his love to God, that he learned to love him so early; and so strong was his conviction on this point, that he ventured to say that, "if suitable pains were taken in the religious

* See statistics, page 60.

instruction and discipline of children, the preaching of the gospel would not be the ordinary means of converting sinners;" meaning that they would generally be converted before they were at age to receive their first saving impression from public discourses.

Ungodly parents serve the devil so effectually, in the first impression on their children's minds, that it is more than magistrates, and ministers, and all reforming means can afterwards do, to recover them from that sin to God. Whereas, if they would first engage their hearts to God by a religious education, piety would then have all those advantages that sin has now. The language which they are taught to speak in childhood, they will use all their life after, if they live with those that use it. *Acts* in childhood become *practices* in youth, and *fixed habits* in age. And so the opinions which they first receive, and the customs which they are used to at first, are very hardly changed afterwards. "We doubt not to affirm, that a religious education is God's first and ordinary means for the begetting of actual faith and other graces in the children of believers. Many have received grace before; but they cannot sooner have actual faith, repentance, or love, that they may have *reason* itself, in exercise. And the preaching of the word by public ministers, is not the first ordinary means of grace to any but those that were graceless till they come to hear such preaching; that is, to those on whom the first appointed means hath been neglected, or proved vain; therefore it is apparent that the ordinary appointed means, for the first actual grace, is parents' godly instruction and education of their children. And public preaching is

appointed for the conversion of those only that have missed the blessing of the first appointed means."

Dr. Dwight says, "If we train up children in the way they should go, they will enter it *almost of course*, follow us to heaven, and be our companions for ever." The conscience is at this period exceeding tender and susceptible, readily alarmed by the apprehension of guilt, and prepared to contend or fly at the approach of a known temptation. All the affections also are easily moved, and fitted to retain permanently, and often indelibly, whatever impressions are made. The heart is soft, gentle, and easily won, strongly attached by kindness, peculiarly to parents themselves. "To every amiable, every good thing it is drawn, comparatively, without trouble or resistance, and united by bonds which no future art or force can dissolve. Against every odious and bad thing its opposition is with equal ease excited and rendered permanent."

One has said, "children of the covenant have frequently the beginning of grace wrought in them in younger years, as Scripture and experience show. Instance Joseph, Samuel, David, Abijah, Josiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Timothy." Never is it too early for good to be communicated, that the new character may get a start of what is evil and ungodly.

Assuming the corruption of human nature, when should we think it wisest to undertake or expect a remedy? When evil is young and pliant to good, or when it is confirmed by years of sinful habit? And when, in fact, is the human heart found to be so ductile to the motives of religion, as in the simple, in-

genuous age of childhood? How easy is it, then, as compared with the stubborness of adult years, to make all wrong seem odious; all good, lovely and desirable. If not discouraged by some ill temper, which bruises all the gentle sensibilities, or repelled by some technical view of religious character, which puts it beyond his age, how ready is the child to be taken by good, as it were, beforehand, and yield his ductile nature to the truth and Spirit of God, and to a fixed prejudice against all that God forbids! The best time, therefore, for effectually enthroning justice and love, truth and piety in the human soul, is the time before any evil spirits have entered in to dwell there; the best time *to preoccupy the soul with good images*, and prejudice the ready will in favor of what is heroic, benevolent, and godlike.

Many persons seem never to have brought their minds down close enough to an infant child to understand that any thing of consequence is going on with it, until after it has come to language, and become a subject thus of *instruction.* As if a child were to learn the language before it is capable of learning any thing! Whereas there is a whole era, so to speak, before language, which may be called the era of *impressions*, and these impressions are the seminal principles, in some sense, of the activity that runs to language, and also of the whole future character. I strongly suspect, says an author, that more is done in the age previous to language, to affect the character of children, whether by parents, or, when they are waiting in indolent security by nurses and attendants, than in all the instruction and discipline of their minority afterwards; for, in

this first age, — the age of impressions, — there goes out in the whole manner of the parent, — the look, the voice, the handling, — an expression of feeling; and that feeling expressed, streams directly into the soul, and reproduces itself there as by a law of contagion. What man of adult age, who is at all observant of himself, has failed to notice the power that lies in a simple *presence*, even to him?

To this power the infant is passive as wax to the seal. When, therefore, we consider how small a speck, falling into the nucleus of a crystal, may disturb its form; or how even a mote of foreign matter, present in the quickening egg, will suffice to produce a deformity; considering also, on the other hand, what nice conditions of repose in one case, and what accurately modulated supplies of heat in the other, are necessary to a perfect product; then only do we begin to imagine what work is going on in the soul of a child during the age of impressions.

One principal reason why we are so often deficient in character or outward beauty is, that piety begins so late in life, having thus to maintain a perpetual and unequal war with previous habit. If it was not true of Paul, it is yet too generally true, that one born out of due time will be found out of due time, more often than he should be afterwards, — unequal, inconsistent with himself, acting the old man instead of the new. Having the old habit to war with, it is often too strong for him. This is one reason why Paul found another law in his members warring against the law of his mind and striving to bring him into captivity to the law of sin and death, that when he would do good evil was present with him.

To make a graceful and complete Christian character, it needs itself to be the habit of existence; not a grape grafted on a bramble. And this, it will be seen, usually requires a Christian childhood in the subject. Having this, the gracious or supernatural character becomes itself more nearly natural, and possesses the peculiar charm of naturalness, which is necessary to the highest moral beauty. It must be implanted in the calm and sunny days of childhood, and nourished and strengthened all along by parental influence at home, aided by the exercises of the Sunday school, the examples and instructions of the daily school, and the tender care and watchful oversight of the church and its ministry. And with all these labors and precautions there will be found no superfluous energy to resist the wiles of the adversary, and to maintain the liberty with which Christ makes free. Hence, to diffuse a knowledge of the Scriptures, and to inculcate their simplest elementary truths, before the natural corruption of the heart develops itself in principles and habits of evil-doing, and while impressions of every kind are most deeply and easily made, is an object taking precedence in many respects of any, and all others. While to neglect applying moral and religious motives to the pure and opening mind of youth is neglecting the first duty of a parent, the sacred duty of a church, and the political duty of a Christian commonwealth. Whatever, therefore, may be said of other instruments of good to man, (not of divine appointment,) the Sunday school, from the PRIORITY of *its influence*, if nothing else, is the surest agency for forming a desirable basis of character, individual and national. The sphere of its action

is childhood; man in the most helpless, yet most critical stage of his being. Meet the child fifty years hence, — how changed, and yet how unchanged and how unchangeable!

Now you may bend and guide him almost at your will. Then he defies the plastic powers of earth and heaven. He will live and live; but never again, no, not a thousand years hence, not ten thousand years, not ten thousand ages hence, will you meet him a youth again. He may be a child again, but not a youth. Never, no, never!

Bright, sweet, precious, momentous period! It passes, passes away for ever. The setting sun will rise again; the receding tides of the sea return; the fading autumn will have a vernal resurrection. Almost every thing but youth revisits us; the winter past, the birds will sing again; our bodies, even, will return from the dust, clothed in the freshness of immortal youth, to take a farewell view of time and its failing scenes. But our natural youth, when it leaves us, bids us a final adieu. None ever return from the sobrieties of life to the gaieties of youth; none from the wrinkles of age to the palmy days of childhood; and within the compass of ten fleeting years his eternity is inclosed, as the oak in the acorn.

Ten years of childhood, in one sense, contain the whole period of responsibility for Man. Now he is determining what he shall be; all the rest is but manifestation. It has been said that the man is made at six years of age. The after process is the filling up of the previous outlines.

A whole eternity is wrapped up in the hour of life's tender being. If so, what events flow from the right

or wrong use of this eventful period, — this apprenticeship of life! And how much of interest attaches to the family, the nursery where these germs of immortality are grown; where habits, tastes, and principles are formed, and the bent of moral inclination and destiny is given! "He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a *child*, shall have him become his son at the length." "But a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." "The great problems of integrity and salvation are ordinarily settled here. The question, whether a man shall be honest, and whether he shall see the kingdom of God, is not determined in the hour of temptation, or at the day of judgment, in any degree as definitely as in a period long preceding that."

When you come to the harvest field with your sickle, it is too late to determine whether you shall cut wheat or tares. That question was determined a long time back.

Manhood, it is true, is a period of responsibility; and a man may be born again, may thus renounce the evil habits formed in his childhood. But, with the majority of men, every thing is virtually determined in childhood. Manhood and eternity are the harvest; childhood is the seed-time. Whatsoever a man sows (a child sows) that shall he also reap.

The case we present, then, is one of intense interest. The men of 1880 can now be brought under the safe and benign influence of divine truth; they can be collected in little groups all over the land, and even a timid woman can arrest their attention, secure their confidence, and infuse into their tender

minds the divine principles of love, forgiveness, truth, peace, benevolence, and patriotism. Her meek and tender eye can control their impatience, and her soft voice can hush the tumult of their passions. Ay, and much more than this. By the grace which is divinely promised, she can bring them on their knees, in cheerful and submissive obedience to the will of their heavenly Father, and send them away from this retired and humble training, in the favor and strength of the Lord God of Hosts.

Let this hallowed influence be brought to bear on the millions of boys in our land at this moment; let it be increased and extended to meet the increasing and extending demand for it; let it be seen, two or three years hence, in the ranks of our apprentices, clerks, and school-boys; let it be traced a little while later in workshops, counting-houses, and colleges; let it then come out in the social and civil relations of life; and finally show itself in a generation of fathers, masters, magistrates, legislators, and citizens. The maxims being true, "like youth, like age;" "the child is father to the man;" — what children are, neighborhoods will be, communities, states, empires, the world!

Here, then, is "opportunity," the "golden spot" of time, the world's crisis, the time and occasion to foresee and control her contingencies. Here you may write the laws of God upon the pliant heart of the race. Here the directing hand may be laid upon the very source of personal and national existence. Here you may administer to the world's infancy the baptism of weal or woe, good or ill, coeval with its existence.

This is the time to turn over the world, the place where to stand to move it. This is the time to lay the corner-stones, to place the foundations of the earth; yea, to fix the pillars of *heaven!* Momentous crisis, — the season of youth! Let us turn our eye to this entering gateway of the world, and behold the rising race as it springs into existence, surrounded by every moral influence, holy and sinful; operated upon by all their mechanics, artists, and architects, in fierce contest, for extent and excellence of workmanship, — "painting for immortality," until the few unsuspecting, preliminary years of youth have cast the die of character, and fixed the seal of destiny. Then, in another direction, let us behold these early principles developed, — the world in action; the nations in commotion; governments forming, flourishing, declining, and falling through corruption and oppression; republics, kingdoms, and empires revolutionizing, waxing, and waning; thrones overturning, dashing against thrones, and rising upon ruins. Behold the march of armies and devastations of war; the champions of truth and of error in fierce contest. Behold, in the sea of life, wave dashing against wave, and billow rolling over billow; light battling with darkness, oft with fearful odds, hanging in even scale, and then again in doubtful issue. Truth, liberty, and righteousness struggling with their antagonists, waxing and losing. Behold the benefactors and scourges of humanity at their mighty deeds! A Paul and a Herod, a Luther and a Voltaire, a Washington and an Arnold; the world of intelligence and ignorance, enterprise and stupidity, of right and of wrong, happi-

ness and misery. The sacramental host of God's elect arrayed with the powers of darkness; the triumphs of truth and the desolations of sin. Let us look at these effects in time, and beyond it, to their reduplicate in eternity, where their destinies are as wide apart as the heaven of heavens and the bottomless abyss. Who could fail to see the momentous importance that attaches to the time which *forms such causes?* And who would not wish to place himself by this gateway, upon these battlements, and contend with all his energies for the *youth*, and nobly perish in their defence?

Run, speak to the young, for you may speak here a "volume in a word;" you may sigh over their follies with a whirlwind; you may illumine their path with the "torch of lightning;" and warn them with the "voice of thunder." *Hasten!* for soon they will have passed the goal of youth. "A word in *season*, how *good* is it!" And this season is but brief, as the "morning cloud and early dew." Society is a vast sea, always in motion, always agitated; wave after wave is rolling up and around us, and passing away. So generations succeed each other on the sea of time. How soon the buds and blossoms of spring ripen into the fruit of autumn! How soon man passes from the cradle to the tomb! How soon all will have gone from the path of youth, and the path of life! Where are our ancestors, and all the generations of past time? "Go to the solitary tomb and inquire." In a little while we shall all pass away. Soon our shadows will lengthen behind us; and the eternal shadow before us, into which our mystic pathway lies, will approach. We have but a

hireling's day. Time mocks the sluggard, and laughs at his drowsy dreams.

We must not tarry or be remiss; other hands, other doctrines, and other influences are at work, and they will not be idle. Let us recollect, too, that though we are at work in a garden, in the garden is a sepulchre. "Death loves a shining mark." It was written on the grave of a little child, "*Sic transit gloria mundi;*" so passeth the glory of the world. "Let us work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work." A certain man is fabled to have made an image in human shape, constructing it so as to speak and dictate important duties. Having completed it, he lay down to rest, setting his servant to watch, with a charge to awaken him whenever the image should say any thing of importance. After a while, the colossal statue opened his brazen mouth, and uttered in solemn and meaning tone, these words, "*Time is.*" The servant did not think these words of much consequence, and permitted the master to sleep. After a time, the image uttered his voice again, in these words, "*Time was.*" The servant did not think these words conveyed any important meaning, and permitted the master still to slumber on. After a space, the massive image spoke again in these words, "*Time is past.*" "*Time is, Time was, Time is past;*" and down fell the colossal statue with a crash to the ground, which awakened the master while the sound was still echoing from the brazen throat, "*Time is, Time was, Time is past.*" The master sprang to seize time, and obey, but was too late,— *Time had*

passed. You may imagine him falling dead in despair at the idol's feet.

With the young emphatically, the momentous words are, *Time is;* and who can fail to see that *every thing* is embraced in these words? And what parent, teacher, guardian, or benefactor, will slumber over such momentous issues? *Now* is the motto of the sacred oracles, — "now is the watchword of the wise, — now is on the banner of the prudent." "To-day is thy scanty pittance;" the golden chance wherewith to snatch fruition; the crisis of human destiny, is now, a still recurring danger.

CHAPTER V.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

This being the relation of the youth to the world, the institution which blesses the youth, blesses the world. And now our eye passing over all others, rests at once upon the Sabbath school.

From its nature, design, and results, we hesitate not to affirm, that this is emphatically *the* institution which blesses the youth, and therefore the world. This is the golden, million jewelled chalice that pours righteousness into the very fountain of the race. It is an oracle placed at the entrance of the world; wisdom uttering her voice at the head of the streets, a preventive and a cure, — it is as a father's blessing upon his children. This is the glowing responsible hand that inscribes righteousness on the pillars, lays the corner-stones, and fixes the deep foundations of the race.

We must, therefore, speak of this institution as the most important and interesting in existence. There is perhaps none to which the eye of the world is so fully and intensely turned, and which so far outweighs in its estimation any other organization. The light of revelation has ever been gradually developed, since the first glimmering taper was lighted in Eden by God's grace, and will doubtless thus con-

tinue till the whole earth is deluged with a cloudless blaze of glory. And it was not until recently that the truth appeared in respect to children. It was formerly supposed that children were not susceptible of religious impressions and religious experience; though they were known to be mortal, they were confessed to be accountable, and acknowledged to be addressed by the Divine Lawgiver. Yet all prayers, labors, and efforts for their immediate conversion to God were faithless. It was supposed that the most which could be done, was to educate them in the theory of religion; to induct them into the forms of godliness, to warn and protect them from dangerous vice, till they should grow up to maturity, till they put on manhood's years, and develop manhood's powers, — when a change should suddenly come over them; when the conscious seed, long and deeply buried, should know its God, and, feeling the power of multiplied years and suns, should germinate; the accumulated combustibles of truths, providences, and instructions were to ignite, smelt the lifeless mass, and draw it out into useful and ornamental materials, as the sun converts the icebergs into the lifeblood and beauty of vegetation, and as the furnace converts the crude metals into jewelry. The child was to grow up in sin to be converted after it came to mature age. There was first to be a crop of sin, and then a crop of holiness. The child was to open upon the world in profound darkness, from which he could not emerge, until the darkness had become deeper and more profound; their disease was to be neglected until it had become inveterate. Children were considered capable of sin, but incapable of

repentance. The relentless arms of the world were to hold them in sin, and they were to be dragged into the church of God only by conquest. The world was to lie in halves, and the kingdom of God was to stretch itself side by side with the kingdom of darkness, making sallies into it, and taking captive those who were sufficiently hardened and bronzed in guiltiness to be converted.

It was thought necessary that the plastic nature of childhood must first be hardened into stone, and stiffened into enmity towards God and all duty, before it could become a candidate for Christian character. We can scarcely conceive of a more unnecessary, unnatural, and pernicious mistake. Hence all efforts for children were merely prospective; thus this momentous and fundamental class of society, in whose bosom slumbered the world's interests and issues, was overlooked and neglected; until in the succession of divine events God raised up a man, as he raised up Moses, Abraham, Paul, Luther, and Wesley, to whom he showed the nature, capacity, and necessities of children, and their relation to earth and heaven; and whom he moved by the sight of their neglected, depraved, and dangerous condition, to organize a Sabbath School for their instruction and salvation, and this sublime deed of philanthropy forthwith had the sanction of earth and heaven.

The light that dawned upon the mind of Robert Raikes flashed over all Christendom; the words he uttered were echoed and reëchoed from every point in the Christian world, finding a quick response from beyond the seas; the divine sparks that were struck

from his heart, kindled simultaneously in almost every Christian nation, State, town, neighborhood, denomination, — yea, and every individual heart was made to ponder upon the subject. The west answered to the east, the south responded to the north; the dwellers in the vales and on the mountain tops began to shout to each other; thus a tongue was given to every place, and attuned to chime the anthem and herald the era of the new-born institution. And now, after the inexperienced operations of half a century, the Sabbath school has grown up and magnified to the greatest institution upon the earth. Already has it blessed the world; and there is not an institution which has so far blessed, and is destined so fully to bless, universal humanity, as the Sabbath school. Already, we repeat, the world has felt its power. There is not an institution of art, science, politics, or morals; scarcely a nation, tribe, or class of men which it has not blessed.

The Sabbath school has produced more pious ministers, physicians, and lawyers; more devoted legislators, teachers, and scholars; more missionaries, philanthropists, and benefactors; more truly Christian men, women, and children, for the last twenty-five years, than all the institutions of the earth combined. True, some others may have outnumbered its trophies to Christianity, but often this has been but the development of seed sown in Sabbath schools. We would not disparage other agencies for doing good to the souls or bodies of men, when we represent a Sunday school as a most appropriate instrument to instruct the ignorant to read and understand the Scriptures, — to disseminate a knowl-

edge of, and due reverence for, the institutions and ordinances of religion, — to improve domestic habits, manners, and economy, — to plant a library of useful books in every neglected neighborhood, — to meet the opening and expanding intellectual and moral powers of the rising generations, — to open a way for the introduction of all the conservative and improving influences of a pure catholic Christianity among the abodes of poverty, discontent, and vice. This system, even when most efficiently carried out, cannot be regarded as in itself omnipotent to the cure of a single social evil, or even to the spiritual rescue of a single child among the many who are brought under its appliances. Yet we know of no human agency to which the unmeasured language of eulogium can be more justly appropriated. God has blessed it in many ways.

Who are at this moment the salt of the earth? Who are the light of the world? Who are bearing with most faithfulness the torch of truth, and thus chasing away the darkness of a benighted world? Both in Europe and America, in civilized and pagan lands, grown up Sabbath school scholars are those who are exerting the greatest influence for good. And these are the mothers who are rearing the Isaacs, and the Samuels, and the Timothys of the church, laying them upon God's altar, training them for the work of plucking brands from the burning, and seeing them become stars in the kingdom of heaven. Look to our courts of justice, our professors' chairs, our pulpits, our Christian physicians, and (not the least important department of life), look to our quiet home circles, and you will find

large numbers who are exercising a valuable influence in society, who now or formerly occupied places in the corps of Sabbath school teachers; who will remember the salutary mental and moral stimulus created by their employment. Among the standard-bearers of the cross, and veteran warriors of our Immanuel, Sunday school scholars now hold a prominent rank. In the training of the children of our Israel in Sunday schools, we behold the marshalling of the host of the Lamb, preparing for the conquest of the earth.

When but a little more than ten years had elapsed from the sowing of the seed in the vast Mississippi Valley, we had tidings of a bountiful harvest. The additions to the church of a single denomination of Christians, (Baptist,) during the year 1840, within the sphere of that work, were thirty thousand, of whom at least two thirds were under twenty-five years of age; and other denominations doubtless had proportional accessions. Fourteen thousand five hundred and fifty-seven conversions are reported in one year, in the schools of a single denomination in the northern part of our Union. The year 1849 reports, in that entire denomination, more than nine thousand conversions; and in the three following years more than twenty-one thousand.

Statistics show that nine tenths of the Christian church of the last twenty-five years have been in some way connected with the Sabbath school; and nine tenths of all our youthful ministers and missionaries were converted there. It has been affirmed that nineteen twentieths of the British missionaries, and a large proportion of the evangelical ministers

of Great Britain, under forty years of age, became pious or received their first permanent religious impressions while connected with the Sabbath school. Henderson, Patterson, and Morrison, are of this number. Says the historian of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society: "It is believed there has scarcely been a revival in any of our churches during the history of this society, in which the Sabbath school has not largely shared. Whole classes of six, eight, ten, and even twenty scholars, have been hopefully converted. From fifty to a hundred conversions have often been reported in a single school in one season. Not unfrequently revivals have originated in Sabbath schools, and the subjects of them been confined exclusively within their limits.

"During the past eight or ten years, when revivals have been so few, the reports to the county and State conferences and associations throughout New England, in almost every case when they have spoken of conversions, they speak of them as being the members of the Sabbath school, and the children of pious parents, and perhaps the children of the covenant.

"So striking have been the facts on this subject, that most pastors and Christians have come to feel that among the class of persons brought into the Sabbath school, are they to look, if anywhere, for happy results to follow the preaching of the gospel, parental instruction, and every good influence for the salvation of men, and especially the young." From a single Sabbath school in Baltimore, more than thirty devoted men of God have gone forth as heralds of mercy, preaching Jesus and his salvation to a perishing world.

During the first eight years of the existence of the Sunday School Union, a report states that twenty-six thousand three hundred and ninety-three teachers and pupils were received to the churches; and this number, it adds, would doubtless be increased to forty thousand, if not fifty thousand, by adding those who have not been reported, and those who have received the truth in the love of it, without making any outward profession. Says the eighth report of the Union: "No instance has yet been known, in which a revival of religion has not either commenced in the Sabbath school, or embraced it in its progress." It adds, "that revivals of religion have been extensive and powerful in Bible classes, and in schools of instruction in human science; and that at least sixty sketches of Bible class revivals have been published during the last year, the subjects of which will not fall short of fifteen hundred or two thousand; the number of pupils embraced in these revivals has been various, — twenty-seven of thirty-five, forty-five of sixty, twenty-eight of forty-seven, are now recollected." In from ten to fifteen colleges revivals have been enjoyed, and from four to five hundred students have been, in the judgment of men, made heirs of salvation.

"It is an interesting fact," says this report, "that of the present Freshman class in Yale College, fifty were professors of religion at their matriculation." Says another report, "Of one hundred and seven persons admitted to the church in the course of nine years, eighty were from the Sunday school. In one church where an interesting revival occurred, not a conversion was known out of the precincts of the

Sunday school." "Of twenty-five additions to the Niagara Square Baptist church, (Buffalo, N. Y.,) all were from the Sunday school or Bible class; and in another church, twenty-four out of thirty of the additions were from the Sunday school ranks. Of forty-five persons who were lately taken into the communion of one of the churches in Andover, (Mass.,) nearly all were from the Sunday school. Nearly one hundred individuals were received into the visible fold of Christ, within a few weeks, from the Sunday school ranks of a Baptist church in Boston;" and a narrative of the state of religion in the Presbytery of Pataskala, Ohio, has the following passage: —

"In two of our churches, revivals are reported, with from fifteen to twenty-five hopeful conversions, and in each, all but two were connected with the Sabbath school." From a district of Texas we have a report of five or six revivals of religion, and it is affirmed that *in every instance but one* these revivals had taken place in communities in which were Sunday schools. From ten schools in Lowell more than six hundred scholars united with their respective churches in a single year. The single State of Connecticut reports nearly twice as many, and Massachusetts four times as many professors of religion from Sunday schools during the year 1831, as were reported from the same source in all the United States up to 1826. A school was established in Shelbyville, (Kentucky,) by Rev. Dr. John Breckenridge, and for nineteen years it was not discontinued a single Sabbath for any cause; at the expiration of which time, it was stated, that *every scholar* of suitable age, who had regularly attended it, had embraced religion.

By reference to the class book of a deceased Sabbath school teacher, it has been found that eighty of the females, and twenty-six of the males who attended his classes have made a profession of religion, either during their attendance upon them or soon after having left them. Of the young men thus instructed, eight were preparing for the ministry, and two had entered upon that duty. Ninety-three have been known to have become Sunday school teachers. Of one hundred and thirty-six persons admitted to a church in Connecticut in one year, one hundred and eleven were connected with the Sabbath school.

A teacher lately informed us, that upon looking over his class books for seventeen years, he ascertained that three fourths of his pupils had become professors of religion, and several of them gospel ministers at home and abroad. Of two hundred children connected with a school within our knowledge, one hundred and thirty-three, or all but sixty-seven, professed to have become converted to the faith of the gospel.

In 1818 a Sunday school was established in St. Louis, then a village of three thousand people, now a city with more than one hundred thousand; mainly as a consequence of that pioneer effort, two large and flourishing churches now exist in that city, whose pastors learned their A B C's in the same school. From a Bible class of fourteen young ladies, eleven are reported to have embraced religion within a few weeks from the formation of the class.

The number of conversions reported for the American Sunday School Union in years 1831–2, was seventeen thousand. It was then estimated that at least

fifty thousand had been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth in the eight years that had elapsed since the society was instituted.

Says the author of the "Rise and Progress of Sunday Schools," "There have been striking instances of the action and reaction of the spirit of revivals on schools and on the community. Sometimes a school has been established with great difficulty, and languished through the coldness and apathy of teachers. A revival of religion in the region round about, has thrown life and energy into the school, and the teachers have gone on their way with new zeal. In other cases a school has been surrounded by formal and worldly professors. A revival has commenced among the teachers and children, spread through the church and town, and brought to life a body of active and devoted friends to the Sunday school. So that it should be known, to the praise and glory of God's grace, that few, if any, instances have yet occurred in which a revival of religion has not either commenced in the Sunday school, or embraced the Sunday school in its progress."

These are a few examples illustrative of the unexampled success which is attending the Sabbath school institution, and which are multiplying throughout the realm of Christendom. Truly the power and promise of this agency are no longer a problem. God has set to it his seal, and said, as if written in rainbow letters of light on the sky, or in the voice of many waters, "Blest of the Lord are Sunday schools."

It has become the right arm of the church, the bulwark of free institutions and civil liberty, the great

moral seminary and conservator of private reputation and national character. Every Christian church has adopted it as a necessary part of its ecclesiastical system, and nearly every distinct division of the visible "body of Christ," in order to add efficiency to its local schools, and to rear up new spiritual nurseries, has provided itself with a publishing house, with periodicals, and with agencies exclusively devoted to the interests of the Sabbath school.

This cause has become the great and the true exponent of the interest and the zeal of the church, in the spiritual welfare of the rising generation. It has struck a chord which never vibrated before, awakening in the bosoms of the aged deep and unavailing regrets that they were born too soon or out of place, before this opportunity presented of making their mark deep, wide, and ineffaceable upon the race, before this lever was placed in their hands for moving the world. This institution has greatly appreciated the individuality of man, it has enhanced his value tenfold. A man is worth ten times as much as he was seventy-five years ago; so is a child worth ten times as much now as then; so is the Bible and religion; so is time and money. While bad men and nefarious pursuits have proportionally depreciated. The violators of the laws of God and man in the liquor traffic, slave-trade, and the like, with their patrons and abettors, have sunk in public estimation like leaden weights in the waves. But the good man's arm is or may be ten times as long. While the world's extremes are brought much nearer, and a year may accomplish many times as much; not only is the value of the *Christian* man thus enhanced, but also

the heathen, ignorant and degraded. Ours is an age of progress. We build where our fathers hid themselves, and our grandfathers saw a wild they dared not approach. The time in which we live is pregnant with great events. One remarkable feature is, that intellect seems to be usurping the sceptre of the world. The time was when he that had the strongest arm was exalted; now the sceptre of power is held in the hand of him who thinks the most profoundly. Once the arena, the battle field, the place appointed for the courtly tournament, were the spots upon which laurels were gathered. Now the study is the spot, and the sceptre that seems to be appointed for the government of the world is the pen of the scholar. An extensive movement is also making toward the realization of the liberty and rights of the individual man. In the ancient republics, and generally in monarchies, the individual has been regarded as comparatively nothing. He was for the State. Now the idea is finding its way that the State is for the individual. While the old men have "dreamed dreams," and the sons and daughters have "prophesied," we are beginning to see "*visions*," visions of glory.

The Sabbath school has created a new era in the history of youth. It has awakened a slumbering world to their importance, turning the public eye fully to the rising generations, and calling forth from the public heart the deepest interest and solicitude, according to the prophetic declaration, it has "turned the hearts of the fathers to the children." We see this illustrated on our anniversary occasions; the good community love the sailor and the soldier, the

missionary and the heathen, the ignorant, destitute, and erring; and they rally at the summons to celebrate the anniversary of their respective organizations; but while they love all these departments, they love the children *more*, and the chord of interest vibrates deeper and wider, when the Sunday school is announced. The greatest gatherings are there. Crowd presses against crowd, rank stands behind rank, and circle rises above circle. *Then* it is that the eloquence of the pulpit, the bar, and the bench is poured forth, while the highest officer of the State occupies the chair. One reason why they love the children more may be, because while all are not connected with the sailor and the soldier; the missionary and the heathen, all *are* connected with children, having them in their arms and family circles, in their streets and societies, in their hearts and affections. The utility of a Sabbath school has the suffrage of consenting Christendom. It has become the theme of the platform, the pulpit, and the press. It has called forth more public meetings, more sermons and speeches, more papers, periodicals, and books, more contributions, prayers, and solicitude, than any other Christian enterprise of the day. To meet the wants of the Sabbath school, polished and able pens have been employed for half a century, in the preparation of works, doctrinal, practical, and historical, adapted to the taste, capacity, and exigencies of the young, whose various authors are speaking more extensively and effectually every month, than they would otherwise be able to do during their whole lives, and who will in these works survive and speak to the generations to come, leavening the rising

community with the leaven of knowledge and piety. The Sunday school library is now imposing in the number of its volumes, and valuable for the richness of its contents.

Question books and catechisms of every description have been multiplied, valuable commentaries upon the sacred text have been written; Palestine and Asia Minor have been crossed and recrossed, and even measured with mathematical instruments, and have afforded subjects for the first artists of the age to illustrate volumes, intended almost specifically for the Sabbath school, at any rate looking in that direction for the most extensive sales. How many Bible dictionaries and manuals, Scripture illustrations and histories, defences of inspiration and of the Christian faith, have been prepared without regard to expense, to meet the exigencies of the Sabbath school. Manuals, guides, and devotional books have multiplied beyond calculation, adapted to elevate the mind, purify the thoughts, refine the taste, enlarge the fancy, and convert the soul. These works supply correct information, and at least the outline of knowledge upon nearly all important subjects. But their aim is higher, they are arrows directed at the heart. The volumes that compose the libraries are, many of them, biographies of eminently great and good Christians, who have filled high places in the church and State, while others record the examples of devoted youths. All the graces of the spirit, and all the tempers of the heart that God approves; the great purposes of life, and the most successful means of overcoming temptation, are here illustrated, both by pen and print. The purest and most whole-

some literature, pointed and pungent, yet attractive and popular, through the beauty and appropriateness of its style, is here offered to the child, "without money and without price." The head and the heart of the youth share at once in the benefit received from these volumes. The world of nature, art, and science, is expanded before the admiring gaze of the youthful eye, and all its diversities are made to become eloquent and practical preachers of truth and righteousness.

What a divine compensation and antagonism, in the providence of God, has Sunday school literature been, to meet the outflowings of an unsanctified press! This sacred literature, coming in early, and operating upon the susceptible heart of childhood, has afforded a mighty barrier against the floods of impurity that have sought an entrance at a later period. These millions of moral and religious books fill a vast chasm. They bridge over a most perilous part of life's journey. They are a kind of miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes to feed the vast multitude of youth. "They have saved thousands from the paths of vice. They lift a breakwater against the swelling tides of delusion; dikes that will save many a home from being deluged with error and misery, many a church from being swept away. They have prevented many a young man from maturing his opposition to Christ into an open and proclaimed hostility. They have led hundreds to the feet, the arms, the bosom of the Redeemer; they have started hundreds on a noble career of usefulness." It would be interesting to follow each one of these millions of Scriptural publications, through

the various channels of its circulation, and mark the traces of its benign influence upon the hearts and conduct of individuals, upon the church, upon private character, and the public welfare. It would be still more interesting to trace the history of each volume, from the first conception of the subject in the mind of the author, to the last perceptible results of its publication. But such a privilege can be enjoyed by no finite mind.

It is astonishing how far-reaching the Sabbath school idea has become in some sixty or seventy years. At first it promised comparatively little, it was frowned coldly upon by many. The first schools were taught amidst storms of persecutions, and even personal abuse, (as almost every moral reform since the fall of Adam, has tracked its way in the blood of its early pioneers). Some called it a whim, others proscribed it as a heresy, and some, argus eyed, saw in it the portent of a revolution. It was none of these, it was the Shepherd going after the sheep he had lost, and seeking until he had found the wanderer. Yet, alas! there were some well-meaning persons, it might be, who did not wish the shepherd God speed on his journey.

It was an unheard of thing to care about poor children; it was a dangerous thing to teach a poor man's urchin his alphabet; it might subvert the constitution, or upset the throne. And so numbers looked with a strange, suspicious eye, upon the man of Gloucester, and they built a wall of prejudice, thick and strong. But the new institution worked on silently, and to the eye of the man who looks for sudden and bursting consequences, imperceptibly.

But to him who notes the dropping of the seed, the springing of the shoot, the budding of the ear and the ripening of the corn, it was working on mightily to the accomplishment of great and gigantic results; quiet and silent indeed like the falling dew, but, like it, fructifying. It sounded no trumpet, rang no jubilant bells, posted no glaring capitals for the public gaze, but unobtrusively, in its own quiet way it did its work, scattering with unostentatious hand the seed of divine truth, — seed which, though soft in its fall like the snow-flake, and small and weak in its first upspringing, "like a handful of corn on the tops of the mountains, yet in the fruit thereof, it was heard like the shaking of Lebanon."

Its energies were mighty, so mighty that, just as massive walls have given way to the living force of growing plants, so did that wall of prejudice, which antiquated notions had reared, fall before the impetus of this spirited idea. And now it has reached everywhere. Wherever the Bible and the missionary go, thither goes also this thought. It has expanded itself even upon the shores of rigid, bigoted India, and the soulless little girls to whom reading was an impossible acquisition (so the Brahmins talked), have gained both souls and wisdom from this religious education movement which has been aroused. Like a grain of mustard-seed, it was small in its beginning, but now it has spread its foliage over every continent, and across every sea, and little nestlings, of every clime and of every color, lodge among its branches. The Sabbath school! How inspiring the mention of its name! How vast the dimensions of its cause, — its breadth and length and height and depth! Its breadth of

domain,— how has it extended its early boundaries! The breadth of its influence,— too expansive to be hemmed in by ocean barriers, it has chartered wind and wave to bear it throughout the world, making its way to Africa, overleaping the walls of China, and causing its presence to be felt wherever the language of Christian civilization is read or spoken, wherever its people go! Like the ocean, which makes its inroads upon every land, penetrating continents, surrounding islands, indenting coasts, sending the pulsations of its mighty wave into channel, gulf, and bay, meeting and rolling back the rivers in their flow; or like the tree which the monarch of Babylon saw in the vision of the night, "It grew and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all." Such is its breadth! It has sounded the voice of free grace in harmonious and thrilling accents over countries and provinces, which but yesterday were made the reign of silence and loneliness.

Its instructions have become to the soldier, the motive and pledge of courage and fidelity. To the sailor, light, comfort, and protection, amidst the perils of the sea, and the greater perils of the shore. They are held up to view in the counting-house and at the bar, as well as from the pulpit and the chamber of sickness. They are recognized in public houses and offices; in steamboats and stages; in workshops, brickyards, manufactories, and fields of labor; in navy-yards, asylums, and hospitals; in workhouses, almshouses, refuges, and prisons. Stretching

away into the past in their researches, they linger among its decayed monuments and gather up the treasures of its wisdom. Penetrating the future, they shed a cheerful radiance across its borders. And soon, like the perfections of their divine Author, there shall be no speech nor language where their voice is not heard, through all the earth and to the end of the world.

Its height is measured by the elevation to which it has exalted church and State; by the heights to which it has borne the individual mind. But the summit of its influence is lost in that pure region which is beyond the view of man. It *descends* to the lowest conditions of our race. It goes down into the dim regions of vacancy, and sheds a gleam of intelligence upon the brow of hopeless idiocy itself. Multitudes of volcanic fires have gleamed above the surface of the sea, but its mighty depths have swallowed up the fiery masses, or, quenching their flames, have converted them into fertile islands, the abodes of living men. So shall this institution, guided thus, swallow up the irruptions of ignorance, superstition, and vice, or convert the theatre of their ravages into dwellings of loveliness.

What has been said of English "Ragged Schools," may be said with equal propriety of some of the Mission Schools in our chief cities. They have sunk a shaft into those subterraneous recesses of society, where generations of criminals are hatched, and the materials of riot are collected against the moment of exposure.

Such is its depth; such are the elements, and such the dimensions of the work for parents and

teachers to perform; and may they never weary of surveying its foundations, marking well its bulwarks, telling the towers thereof, and urging it forward to the utmost completion of its design.

This institution being godlike, we also judge it to be imperishable. It has within itself, since it is the springing forth of Christian love, the principle of vitality; it stands alone, independent of other institutions; it rests upon no synodical decree; it asks no tithes; it is bound to no hierarchy. Church polity might be demolished, and church systems drift down the stream of time, and Sunday schools nevertheless exist; for they are as free as the air you breathe, and wherever a group of little children could be gathered, and a teacher full of love be found to meet them, there would still stand forth that most catholic of all things, a Sunday school. It is amaranthine, for it cannot wither away. It is asbestos-like, for it cannot be consumed. Imperishable! or if it cease to be, no nearer date to its extinction shall be found, than when its existence is unneeded; when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest, and the small and great shall be prepared to stand before God.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL — CONTINUED.

If there is any one agency besides the preaching of the gospel which more than another has been effectual in the suppression of vice and crime, in the deliverance of youth from the degradation of ignorance and of debasing habits, that agency is the Sunday school. It goes to those whom the preached gospel without it would never reach; and in those who, if they were to hear the truth, would be incompetent to understand it, it develops a capacity by expanding the mind and refining the feelings, thus preparing the soil of their hearts for the good seed of the kingdom of God. Instances are recurring all over the land; in the heart of cities, and in the neglected neighborhoods of the country, where Sabbath school teaching enters modestly, but fearlessly, into the contest with sin.

By slow but sure advances it undermines ignorance, and hastens the downfall of error; it pours in the light of truth, and reveals the hideousness of iniquity to those who had never before perceived it. By degrees it refines the sentiments and enlightens the conscience of a community, while it brings individuals, sometimes singly, and sometimes by scores, to the saving knowledge of the truth. It restrains

Sabbath breaking and its kindred vices; it throws a shield of protection around the morals of youth; it creates a taste for reading and studying the word of God, and thus silently but powerfully conduces to form character, after the Christian model. In the train of this enterprise follows not only light but life, not only education but piety. It erects not only the school-room, but the church of the living God; and, while in hundreds of cases it lays the foundation and carries up the walls of the temple of truth, it prepares the living worshipper to become God's spiritual building.

This institution, when judiciously established and prayerfully sustained, flourishes both among the learned and unlearned, in the frontier settlements of America and among the ragged outcasts of European cities, among the untutored savages of the West and among the heathen of Africa and Asia. The uniform effect of this institution is to rescue the Sabbath from the desecration of vice fostered by idleness, to beget a reverence for the Bible, and for the institutions which spring up and live only under its influence; to diffuse useful knowledge, to shed light and impart purity in the abodes of darkness and vice; to correct evil habits; to reconcile enemies, reclaim profligates, convert infidels to the faith of the gospel, and prisons to palaces; to chasten perverse tempers, inculcate forgiveness, peace, love, and universal philanthropy; to counsel the perplexed, guide the inquiring; to fix the volatile thoughts and roving affections of early life upon substantial good; to establish habits of industry, sobriety, and civility; to diffuse useful knowledge, to multiply intellectual

knowledge and religious books; to increase and perfect common schools; to improve and elevate intellectually and morally the whole mass of society; to ennoble and enrich with heavenly treasures the children of science, refinement, and affluence; to plant in every little bosom the elements of worship, the foretaste of immortal bliss; to nourish the soul with bread from heaven, and finally lead it upward and onward to everlasting life and immortal joy. It opens little perennial fountains in the wilderness, which erelong become wellsprings of life; it plants here and there a germ in the barren waste, which becomes a nucleus, around which cluster the fruits of the Spirit, the praying and preaching circle, and ultimately the temple of God, the worshipping assembly, the settled pastor, and a reformed, Christianized community; thus converting the wilderness to a fruitful field, and causing the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Says an author, "By the blessing of God upon these schools, they have brought order out of confusion, and light out of darkness. Domestic peace has been restored, the altar of domestic worship reared, the Sabbath consecrated, religious congregations gathered, and churches of the living God planted; so that in many solitary places where no voice was, notes of joy and gladness, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody, are now heard. The Sabbath school is auxiliary, counteractive, and supplementary. As an *auxiliary*, it promotes first, a Christian family training; and second, a healthful organic action of the church upon the young. As a *counteractive*, it corrects the effects of Christian family training. As *supplementary*,

it is a necessary, and at present the only available means to supply the great defect of our public school system."

The gathering of thousands of children out of rags, obscurity, and vice; the opening of schools in hundreds of dark and neglected neighborhoods; the introduction of hundreds of thousands of persons to the study of God's word; the circulation and systematic perusal of millions of excellent books and papers; the founding of numerous churches; the moral training on the Sabbath of multitudes of youth of all classes; and the preparation and means of glorious revivals of religion, — these, *these* are hopeful results; and the thousands of Sabbath schools scattered throughout the country, may be considered our nation's police; and what is peculiarly excellent, they are a powerful preventive police, instead of corrective.

The Sabbath schools through all our land, are our standing army of freedom. And, first, it is an army of *defence.* It is set for the defence of the divinely authorized right of the universal reading and circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Our country has been invaded by an army more malignant and powerful than that of any despotic foreign nation, full of deadly hatred to all religious and civil freedom; and in its invasion our dearest rights, interests, and privileges are involved. They propose to take from our common schools the Bible, — the Bible which *gave* us the common schools, and has *preserved* them! Thus they would cut off the root, and girdle the trunk of our institutions. In the Sabbath school, a noble army is training up not only to sing, but to *feel* the sentiment, "We'll not give

up the Bible." We trust the time will come, when those who fill the halls of our national councils will be governed by better principles than many of our pseudo-patriots of the present day, who, for popularity or gain, would sell themselves to any principles or measures, however destructive of morality or religion. We can contemplate with hope, the halls of legislation filled with Sabbath school scholars; and a Sabbath school scholar — taken, perhaps, from the street by some benevolent teacher — in the Presidential chair. From this institution we may hope to see men come up, true to their principles; who, having sworn upon the altar of their God eternal hostility to wickedness in high places, and all places, will stand unswervingly by their profession.

The Sabbath school is an army of *invasion.* It is to carry the war into the very heart of the enemy's country. Its aggressive movements, vigorously and promptly urged on, will demolish the fortresses of sin, oppression, and infidelity. Every thorough Sabbath school education is an armor, and every Sabbath school is a repository of swords, bayonets, and muskets for the defence of the nation. It is also an army of *occupation.* It enters and establishes landmarks, plants posts and fortifications and colonies. It makes no provision for retreat, nor ever abandons a post. From these points it designs to spread out its influences as far as the verge of the green earth.

And, finally, it is a victorious army; under its great Captain, its triumphs shall be inevitable and absolute. Numbers shall increase with victories. Already its legions, joining hands, would encircle

the nation. The armies of Xerxes, Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon combined, would be put to the blush in less than twenty-five years by this institution, if its progress continues.

Do any doubt that interests so deep, complicated, and unending as the interests of the State, are dependent in any way upon so humble and unpretending an instrumentality as the Sabbath school? This claim will not be deemed a matter of surprise when we consider, that *primary and fundamental causes are generally remote and obscure.*

It is so in nature. The blessing of solar light and heat may appear to be explained by the daily return of the sun to complete its circle in the heavens. But its true explanation will involve the action of forces too remote and obscure for human comprehension. The dews of heaven moisten the earth's surface, by the mysterious and concealed attraction which condenses the vapors of the atmosphere, and brings them to the ground. The wild tornado which sweeps over the plain and through the forest, carrying destruction in its way, must be traced with philosophic care to the inexplicable action of heat upon atmospheric air, destroying its equilibrium, and whirling it in resistless fury over land and sea. The rumbling earthquake and terrific volcano must be explained by the billows of fire which roll and rage within the bowels of the earth, far below the gaze of man.

It should not, therefore, be a matter of surprise, that the mightiest revolutions of empires should be traced to causes far remote from their final developments. In our estimate of national results, we are perpetu-

ally and strangely deceived. Nations rise and fall, and we attribute them to the actions of armies or legislators, or, perhaps, to chance alone, whereas a more philosophic view would reveal hidden action of principles which, by their own laws, had been combining for centuries, and preparing to operate these mighty results. It is a common remark, that "Romans destroyed Rome;" and how was it done? We answer, by proving recreant to the virtues of their ancestors. Corruption, infamous vice, polluted the fountains of education; scenes of dissipation, cruelty, and debauch hardened the hearts and depraved the morals of the children, — taught youth a fallen standard of excellence, and perverted the nobler feelings of the soul. These youths were soon the tyrants, and the enslaved who followed the glorious era of the Antonines, and preceded the downfall of Rome! The fearful revolution of France was not caused by the assembly of the States General, nor by the furious action of Jacobins or royalists, but by the unnatural education of the children under the galling pressure of tyranny, by the haughty priests and nobles of that wretched land.

The Dantons and Robespierres of that headlong age were taught, from childhood, in the school of infamy, cruelty, and death; and the mighty chief who rose upon the surface of this stormy sea, to control its raging billows, was not a creature of circumstances, but the aggregation of elements which had been evolved from the restless heaving mass, by the action of immutable laws. The American Republic was not the creature of the American Revolution. The spirit of liberty came to this vast wilderness in

the breasts of the pilgrims. It was produced in the Puritan age of the Protectorate, and fled to this land, an exile from the place of its birth, amid the horrors of the Restoration. It was the earliest impress upon the infant minds of American children. It combined, with a stern integrity, the unbending virtue and the lofty patriotism of American character, to form the heroes of the Revolution, to crown our struggle with success, and to establish the noblest form of government upon the face of the earth.

The Revolution did not make Washington. Emergency does not make principles or men, it only develops and applies their power. The greatness and the glory of our hero must be traced to the nursery of Lady Washington.

Republican institutions are dependent for their perpetuity upon the moral element. A government of *force* may be perpetuated for ages without regard to the question, What is right? But where the will of the people is the sovereign law, what can be the basis of civil existence if corruption control the masses? Let the vices of infidelity be infused into the minds of our children, the authority of God be contemned and set at defiance habitually and universally from infancy, and how soon would contempt of law, disregard of social virtue, misrule, and national ruin, follow in the train!

The national heart must be produced, not by *influencing*, but by *forming* men.

> "What constitutes a State?
> Not high-raised battlements or labored mound,
> Thick wall, or moated gate;
> No:—men, high-minded men,

Men who their duties know,
But know their right, and knowing dare maintain,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain,
This constitutes a State."

To influence men is often the duty of philanthropy, and even to attempt it when the result is hopeless. But, we may depend upon it, this cannot be reliable as a mode of permanent reform. Temporary success, it is true, may be seen to follow our attacks upon selfish and aspiring men, who are bent upon power even at the expense of all that is dear in freedom, and glorious in public independence. But this is but seeming compliance. It is the bending of hypocrisy by the pressure of hope or of fear; and so soon as the pressure is removed, by its own elasticity it will resume with complacency illy concealed, its condition of selfish devotion to its darling and hazardous schemes.

No! we must *form* the men that are to restore our land from the dominion of selfishness.

Education must mould and prepare the minds of the next generation, upon whom the burden of this conflict will devolve.

In reviewing an eventful portion of history, we infer this one grand moral, namely: "That in an enlightened period of society, no government can be either prosperous or secure, which does not provide for expressing and giving effect to the general sense of community."

What that general sense shall be, is determined within the first fifteen, perhaps within the first ten, possibly within the first five years of the life of each succeeding generation!

Let it be supposed that from earliest childhood the men of the coming age are taught to follow the *right*, the dictations of duty, whatever may be the result to themselves, and who will question that a brighter era will dawn upon our beloved land?

Self-interest, controlled by exalted virtue, and subordinated by the principles of eternal rectitude, devoting every power to the good of society, will accomplish the object. In this way reform would be permanent and reliable.

Inwrought into the very structure of the soul, arraying the immense power of habit on its side, virtue and public spirit would triumph for ever over the selfishness of aspiring demagogues, and retain in perpetuity, for ages to come, the glorious principles of our free and honored republic.

It is not a free government that makes a free people, but a free people that makes a free government. Republicanism and Freedom are but mere names for beautiful but impossible abstractions, except in the case of a christianly educated people.

How often nations that legions could not intimidate have been enervated by luxury, blighted by infidelity, distracted by anarchy, and thus though unconquerable, have fallen without a foe, — overcome of themselves, their own vicious propensities.

The Bible is the only foundation on which nations as well as individuals can build.

The Bible, — the voice of God, — the philosophy of creation, — the constitution of the universe, — the influence of the mind of God on the mind of man, — a ray of Heaven's own effulgence, — the pivot on which swings the needle of hope that points the

earthborn heavenward: "a pencil of rays, streaming from the point of creation, as it lies in a past eternity; falling down through the darkness of the fabulous ages; penetrating the periods of historic day with a light above the brightness of the sun; and resting at last with broad illumination on our own times." It opens the only unbroken vista of light, through the shadowy past, up to that mysterious period when the throne of God rested on chaos. It affords the only light, by which individuals or nations can "navigate the sea of life and gain the port of bliss." And Sabbath schools recognize this great and obvious principle. They take the tender mind, and early impress it with the stamp of that truth which reveals the source of law, the means of moral renovation, for individuals and society, and the true principles of subordination to rightful authority. They make the Bible their text-book, its truth is the science taught. And what invests this institution with peculiar importance is, the fact that it brings the gospel — not the traditions and commandments of men, nor the rites and ceremonies of a vain superstition — but the *gospel*, in its divine purity and simplicity, to bear upon its legitimate subjects early in life, upon the tender and susceptible minds of the youth, where it will never be obliterated, — moulding easily and effectually those tender minds to virtue and piety, before drawn into the evil practices of sin. It assails evil at the fount, before it is clothed with the energy of habit; it strikes at its early strong-hold, — the depraved nature of every child. This method of striking at the vicious indolence, imposture, intemperance, dishonesty, licentiousness, violence, injustice, and

oppression which have made so much poverty and misery, comes recommended by a double claim; that it is conservative as well as corrective. Other instrumentalities for doing good have to grapple with established habits, which present almost insuperable obstructions to success, and are necessarily restricted in the probability of efficiency by the comparative paucity of their objects. Whereas Sabbath schools have comparatively few evils to encounter, few prejudices to remove, few false opinions to correct, and few obstacles to the right understanding of the simple truths which form the basis of the Christian faith. *From the priority of its influence*, therefore, if nothing else, the Sabbath school is the surest agency for forming a desirable basis of character, individual and national, and has exceeded every human device in hastening the promised day, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed.

CHAPTER VII.

EDUCATION AND RELIGION.

EDUCATION and religion are the prime elements of society, the two powers that move the world; not either alone, not an unsanctified intelligence, or an unintelligent faith, but combined, they are omnipotent. It is this which gives America and England such power over all the rest of the world, and assigns them the mission of the world's renovation and conversion. It is not their extent of territory, their numbers, age, or wealth; their commerce, enterprise, or bravery; nor their fleets, armies, and fortifications; but it is their intellectual and moral cultivation which makes them the Joshuas, commanding the sun, moon, and stars of all other powers to stand still, that they obey them.

The same is true of individuals; those men who are the soul of their generation, whose voices give tone to society, who hold society in their hands, at whose touch every thing vibrates, and at whose breath it pulsates, the tap of whose fingers awe senates and cabinets, and the words of whose lips are engraven on the pillars of society; those men who have power with God and with man, are such as have placed one foot upon Mount Sinai and the other

on the hill of science, and have been endued with power from both; who operate through the combined power of a trained intellect and a trained heart. "Knowledge is power," and "faith conquers the world." Thus education and religion are the propelling power of all the complicated machinery of mental and moral progress.

There is not in the wide world a living thing more frail, helpless, and unpromising, than man in his infancy. He is feeble and dependent beyond any other animal, and for a much longer period. He is utterly unable to perform any good offices for himself. He cannot defend himself against the most insignificant enemy, or the most inconsiderable danger. He must inevitably perish upon whatever spot his frail body may happen to repose, unless some careful hand feed, protect, and cherish him. Of the tact and skill which are to form the endowment of riper years he does not now manifest the faintest trait. He is even less gifted than brutes of his own age with the instincts which, in the absence of a higher intelligence, guide every other living creature. He breathes, utters some inarticulate sounds, swallows the simple food that is put into his mouth, and makes some unmeaning muscular movements, and that is all he can do to announce to the spectator, that this embryo immortal possesses even the lowest of the attributes of things that live.

Such is man physically, at his entrance upon a career in which he is appointed to act so important a part, and fulfil so unfathomable a destiny. Nor of the higher faculties which he is to develop and exercise in after-life does the slightest glimmering now

appear. He exhibits nothing like character, whether good or evil. He has no reason, no conscience, no moral or immoral habits, no religion, no opinions, no ideas. His mind is a blank; his heart is a mere organ of the performance of an animal function. Yet there is something wonderful and even sublime in this embryo man. He may become a hero, a philosopher, or a saint, — a scourge, or a benefactor of his race. He is likely to become an active and competent agent in human affairs, and to perform a part in the drama of the world; and he will assuredly become a partaker either of endless life or of eternal death. Great faculties lie concealed under such unpromising aspects. They are seen by the eyes of God; "yet being imperfect, in his book are they written; they are fashioned in continuance, while as yet there is none of them."

They are not substances nor powers, but merely susceptibilities, capacities, and activities. Though all other animals are mature almost at once, even in advance of man in his beginning, they gain within a few days from birth all the intelligence of which they will ever be susceptible; but man is capable of ceaseless progression from his blank beginning, toward the infinite. And to develop these latent capacities, — to bring them out for action and enjoyment, to transform this helpless, insignificant thing into a good and wise man, fitted to serve God and his generation on earth, and to enjoy him forever in heaven, is the responsible work of education.

"Education seeks to realize in the soul the image of the Creator, to unfold and perfect its powers. It is that agency which takes the helpless and pleading

infant from the hands of its Creator, and apprehending its entire nature, tempts it forth, now by austere and now by kindly influences and disciplines, and thus moulded at last into the image of a perfect man, armed at all points to use the body, nature, and life for its growth, renewal, and dominion over the fluctuating things of the onward."

Man having a twofold nature, must be educated in reference to both; he must be fed with aliment suited to his compound being; he must be supplied with intellectual and moral nourishment; for to provide only for the health, growth, and comfort of the body, and for the disciplining of the intellect to the utter neglect of the soul, we do but contribute to rear the framework of the wonderful structure of man, to put up its outline and arrange this scantling, while that which conduces most to beauty and strength is left entirely unsupplied. The building thus unfinished, is exposed to be shattered by every pestilential wind. Mere physical and intellectual training, — the development of the mere skeleton of man, — to the exclusion of the moral and religious part of his nature, whether in child or adult, often proves a curse instead of a blessing.

Intelligence alone will never preserve a people. We point for confirmation to the wrecks and ruins of kingdoms and empires which were the cradles of science, the seats of intellectual learning; but have crumbled to pieces from their own inherent rottenness, and gone to the sepulchre of nations, because they lacked the moral lifeblood, the living heart, the vital power of Christianity. So of individuals. Generals who have conquered the world, have fallen

victims to themselves, — overcome of their own passions and propensities. Philosophers, who have counted the stars, weighed the spheres, and sowed the seeds of science, have been ignorant of the first principles of human nature and divine sovereignty. Sovereigns who have played with thrones as with dice, have suddenly dropped from their nerveless grasp the shattered sceptre amid the falling stars of their crown, and from the trailing of their mantle in the dust, have sunk to powerless ignominy and eternal forgetfulness, because they knew not their God.

"The exaltation of talents above virtue," says Dr. Channing, "is the curse of the age. Education is now chiefly a stimulus to learning, and thus men acquire power without the principles which alone make it a good. Talent is worshipped, but if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a demon than a God." The moment you separate the religious element from the intellectual, you render the latter powerless for good. "It is clear that nothing can sustain the fabric of human society but the religion of the Bible. This must ultimately become the groundwork of popular education, — not the reading of it merely, — but the application of its holy principles to every act of life, and to every purpose of the heart. Great efforts are made to diffuse knowledge; but knowledge is not in itself a blessing to the individual or to society.

If the love and fear of God is not the all-controlling, all-pervading, all-absorbing principle, it is very problematical whether knowledge tends either to individual or national happiness.

"Since *learned men* have abounded, good men are scarce;" and to pursue the thoughts of another, I would say, "let the intellect be cultivated to the greatest extent; but let not the *heart* be neglected, or we may still be but archangels fallen." Physical and intellectual education aim at the perfection of the instruments which may become splendid implements of evil, if moral education does not succeed in regulating the power which is to use them. If we make a giant of the intellect and but a dwarf of the conscience, we dethrone God and enshrine in the soul instead, selfishness and passion.

One of the most eminent of American jurists and statesmen has said: "The more I reflect upon Sabbath schools, the more deeply am I impressed with their importance. Education, without moral training, may increase national knowledge, but it will add nothing to national virtue." By a most intelligent and able report made some years ago by Guizot, it appeared in those departments of France where education had been most advanced, crime was most common; and, by later reports, it is shown that Prussia, Scotland, and England, where the means of education had greatly increased, — especially in Prussia and Scotland, — criminal offences have increased.

Making due allowance for the growth of population, and the aggregation of individuals in carrying on various useful enterprises, the principal cause of this is, a *want of moral culture.* Hume informs us that in the purest state of Roman society, three thousand criminals were convicted and capitally punished in one year for the horrid crime of poisoning. Knowledge without constraint only increases the capacity

of an individual for mischief. As a citizen, he is more dangerous to society, and does more to corrupt the public morals, than one without education. So selfish is our nature, and so prone to evil, that we require chains, moral or physical, to curb our propensities and passions. A nation may be great in its political power and in its mental attainments, without possessing the basis of moral power, which is the only foundation for practical liberty. France was intelligent when she burnt the Bible, wrote over the gateways of her cemeteries, "Death is an eternal sleep," and upon the altars of her temples, "There is no God;" and caused her streets to flow with human gore; but she trusted in bayonets rather than morals, and wrote a brief history in the blood of three millions of her subjects; and centuries will pass ere she recovers from the effects.

Liberty with infidelity is liberty simply to destroy. Such a son once asked his father for a collegiate education. "My son," said he, "be converted first, for, to give an education to an infidel is like putting a sword into the hands of a madman," — or a sciened but unprincipled swordsman who will wield it for destruction, and the more power he has, only the more dangerous is his influence over others. "Give your harp a thousand strings to multiply its melodies, and you multiply its capability of producing discord in a still greater proportion."

That *virtue* which rests on any other foundation than religious faith and religious fear, will stand only until the next tide of temptation shall sweep it into the flood.

Education and religion when properly received,

promote each. other. Hence we find a very large proportion of our college students have been early connected with the Sabbath school; whilst a large proportion of our theological students have been the subjects of early intellectual training. The colleges of a certain denomination contained recently fourteen hundred and fourteen students; twelve hundred and fifty-two of whom were once Sunday school scholars; indeed, all except one hundred and sixty-two. Assuming, then, that one half the youth of the country attend Sabbath schools, it will be seen that twelve hundred and fifty-two students come from the Sabbath schools to the academies and seminaries, where one hundred and sixty-two come from those who do not attend. It is therefore obvious, that Sabbath schools tend to arouse the intellectual energies of our youth, and to furnish students for our academies, seminaries, and colleges. And upon the other hand it was ascertained by this denomination, that nearly one half of all her students over fifteen years of age were professors of religion and members of evangelical churches. Thus education and religion mutually react and promote each other; and while religion is the basis of education, intelligence must be the guide of religion. School-houses and churches are the true symbols of New England civilization, as temples, pyramids, and mausoleums were the symbols of ancient civilization. The condition of these buildings is a fair index of the intelligence and virtue of the people. Where the school-house and church are decayed and dilapidated, it is a pretty sure indication that the people are ignorant and vicious. In such a place, enterprise dies, busi-

ness declines, and property loses its value. Increase of intelligence is usually attended by an increase of virtue. These have generally advanced or declined together.

Learning has ever been the handmaid of religion, and on these two elements depends our prosperity as a people. The common school and the Sabbath school, says Mr. Mann, "are the two great levelling institutions of the age." The claims of this twofold education, therefore, take precedence of all pecuniary or political interests. And the latter is more important than the former, by how much the spiritual and eternal destiny of man transcends the interests of his momentary earthly existence.

"All over New England and the Union, wherever the simple church spire points heavenward, and the school-house stands an ark of light by the way-side, and the 'decent graves' whiten the hill slopes with their memorial stones, be sure the spirit of the Pilgrims has paused and passed."

Education and religion will walk the earth hand in hand in the Millennium, in a heavenly alliance; having scattered the darkness of ignorance and depravity, and renovated the mind and heart of universal mankind; as in Eden the tree of knowledge and the tree of life stood side by side.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL AND MODERN IMPROVEMENT.

THE still greater utility of the Sabbath school will appear, when we consider that it promotes in an eminent degree both intellectual and moral instruction. For this purpose was it originally instituted by Mr. Raikes, and Sabbath schools have ever proved of immense service in elevating the character of weekday schools, by removing profanity and vicious habits of every kind, and prompting the youthful scholar to higher purposes in the acquisition of knowledge; also in facilitating the arts of reading, spelling, often of writing, and establishing the habits of study, reflection, and good behavior.

The Sabbath school has been termed "the evangelist of common schools." In many instances it has been the pioneer, and in many the parent of public schools; and not the least among the beneficial effects of Sabbath school to the public school, is the multiplication of text-books. When the Sabbath school originated, many of our common schools had but one book, and that a dictionary, out of which the pupils were daily taught to spell in chorus, never failing to close with the longest word in the vocabulary. Such, Dr. Bowditch tells us, was the character of the school which he attended. Some schools con-

tained an arithmetic, which had come down through successive generations, the latter but tracing out the figures which the former had made.

But the multiplication of Sabbath school books, adapted to the capacity and wants of the children, has doubtless done much in effecting the change which we now witness in the common schools.

The system of cheap district school libraries was suggested by the publications of the Sunday school. "And now," says one, "we have our colleges, universities, free schools, and lyceums, with the system of popular lectures; our free press, too, sending out millions upon millions of pamphlets, books, tracts, with seven hundred public libraries containing two millions of volumes for the instruction of the public mind. The whole apparatus of intellectual education is set in motion on a great scale, and with very visible effects."

Our common schools, besides their varied and multiplied text-books, contain millions of volumes of well selected reading. The district school libraries in New York contain two millions of books, and the funds of that State devoted to educational purposes amount to six and a half millions of dollars. The comparatively new State of Michigan has one hundred thousand volumes; Ohio has a school fund amounting to one million five hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The amount raised by taxation for free schools in Massachusetts is about eight hundred thousand dollars; and within a few years nearly two millions have been expended in erecting new school-houses. In the city of Boston, a single school-house cost sixty thousand dollars. Facts similar

to these are coming into existence throughout the Union.

Towns have been districted; the wages of teachers have risen twenty per cent., indicating that better qualifications and a higher order of talent are demanded by the public.

Advanced studies have been introduced into common schools, and many high schools have been also established, which take rank with academies. Academies have also received a new impulse, and have raised their standard of requirements and studies.

And again, we must not forget there are thousands and tens of thousands of children growing up in the world, who are receiving in the Sabbath school all the education they will ever obtain; who are learning there all they will ever know of the arts of reading, spelling, and writing. This is emphatically true of the many parts of the world where our admirable system of common and public schools are not enjoyed; and even in our country this number is astonishingly large.

In the State of Indiana, says a recent report, there are seventy thousand adults who can neither read nor write. In South Carolina the proportion of free whites over twenty-one years of age, who can neither read nor write, is one in seventeen; and in North Carolina, with a population of two hundred and ten thousand, near fifty-seven thousand, or more than one half of all her citizens, are in the same state of ignorance. In one section of Illinois one half of the people, and in the whole State, thirty thousand, cannot read. A southern colporteur says, "In one

neighborhood, consisting of fifteen families, nine were destitute of the Bible, and no member of their families could read."

Another says, "I want thousands of testaments to put into the hands of as many thousand children gathered into Sabbath schools, where there is no Bible Society, no stated preacher of the gospel, and an almost entire destitution of books; among seven hundred children only ninety testaments are found."

Among the day school teachers some are reported as profane, some intemperate, and some notoriously debauched. In the great State of Indiana, where two thirds of the youth are growing up unblessed with the means of intellectual and spiritual culture, sixty-one thousand *freemen*, at the polls in 1849, *voted against* establishing an efficient system of common schools! It was stated on the floor of Congress a few years since, that there were numbers in that body representing large districts where a *sixth*, or a *fourth*, or a *third* of their constituents could not read the record of their legislative wisdom, or peruse the eloquent speeches delivered in those halls, and spread over the State at the expense of the Commonwealth, neither the charter of their liberties, or the votes they cast in the exercise of their elective franchise!

A paragraph, which recently went the rounds of the public prints, contained the pith of the report of the superintendent of the common schools to the legislature of one of our largest States. He tells us that "in several parts of the State, the school directors were found to be totally incapable of performing their duty, for the very potent reason, *that they themselves do not know how to read or write!*" He

tells us of one parish, in which the "warrant in the file contained, instead of the signature, the *mark* of twelve different directors!" In other districts the proportion of the directors who made their mark, instead of signing their names, was two out of every three. No wonder that school reports were made out without either logic, grammar, or spelling!

To all these new States, therefore, the Sabbath school is the twofold boon of heaven, spiritual and intellectual, being the principal means of enlightening the heart and mind; and it is no uncommon thing to see parents and children, and in some instances grandparents, two and three generations attending the same school, possibly sitting in the same class, and learning the rudiments of an education.

One of the most zealous and efficient Sunday school missionaries in the West, never enjoyed the benefit of common school instruction a week in his life. All the instruction he ever had, he received in the Sunday school; and that too, after he was a man grown, and had a family. To the Sunday school, he says, he owes every thing he is and hopes for in this world, and the world to come. And there are many similar instances among ministers, missionaries, and benefactors.

The scholar of Robert Raikes, to whom we have referred as still living, received intelligence and piety sufficient in his school to guide her down to the present time in honor and usefulness, having never attended any other school.

More than a million copies of the "Union Primer," whose lessons begin with the alphabet, have been published and sold by the Union; the sales for the

last year amounted to more than one hundred thousand, and the one hundred thousand might have been three, if adequate means had been furnished.

The amount of intellectual education given in the Sunday school is very great; ofttimes greater than is acquired in the same length of time spent in the weekday school. But this is not its great object; this advantage necessarily follows in seeking the education of the heart. In ten years' attendance on a Sunday school, five hundred and twenty days, or nearly one year and a half of instruction is given and received, at the rate of from one and a half to three hours a day. Add to this the study necessary in preparing for the Sabbath and the perusal of Sunday school library books, and it will be seen that the amount of intellectual education is very great. The Sabbath school has done much in creating that deep sense of the need of education which now pervades the community.

Men have come to feel the sentiment of Washington, "that in proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." That men must be governed by force from without, or by principle within; and there is no other alternative. The world has been governed in past ages by Pretorian cohorts, by janizaries, and by standing armies, but the time has come for the reign of reason and law. Opinions are more potent than bayonets. It has been demonstrated, that ignorance in the oppressed is the mightiest power in the hand of the oppressor; and in proportion as education gives birth to the love of liberty, despotism yields

before it; and that if we would dispense with standing armies and an efficient police, we must give the people proper instruction. We must build poor-houses and penitentiaries, or furnish convenient school-houses. We must employ judges and executioners, or provide competent teachers and superintendents. If we neglect our schools, we must enlarge our prisons.

England has no free schools. More than one half her population cannot read and write. Poverty and crime are the constant servitors of ignorance. Thousands die annually of starvation, and more than five thousand are every year convicted of high crimes and misdemeanors. While the prisons of England are full, the penal colonies refuse to receive the convicts which are landed upon their shores. It costs almost as much in England to support a culprit as a teacher. How different the results! In Ireland, gaunt hunger treads in the steps of ignorance and vice; while famine follows in its train, and sweeps off millions.

There is said to be thirty thousand prisoners in the United States; only one third of them can read, and not two hundred have ever been connected with the Sabbath school. In some prisons not one convict in a hundred has received any correct early intellectual or moral training.

The prison statistics will bear out these statements. Rowland Hill said in 1830, the recorder of London had informed him, that not more than one out of a hundred juvenile offenders brought before him, had ever been in a Lancastrian Sabbath school. A committee of the house of commons had ascer-

tained, on examination of the prisons in London, in which seven hundred children from the ages of eight to sixteen were confined, that only two had ever been in the Sabbath school. We have but to look into the court calendars, and mark the number and trace the history of those whom retributive justice has overtaken and doomed to infamy in the very blush of life's morning, or to the thick ranks of their comrades, yet "unwhipped of justice," whose escape from the clutch of the constable only emboldens them to a stouter defiance of parental and magisterial authority, to feel the full force of this subject.

Impressed with the importance of both departments of learning, our early fathers made it a law to attend both school and church; and impressed still with the importance of an education commensurate with our religious privileges and attainments, most of our federal States have provided schools, at the public cost, and opened them to the free entrance of every child, and in many instances enforced their attendance by pains and penalties. Massachusetts, under these convictions, sustains nearly two thousand churches and places of public worship, valued at some eleven millions of dollars, and probably expends, for the support of religion at home and abroad, from two to three millions of dollars annually. She also maintains some three thousand schools, academies, and colleges, at an annual expense (including every thing) of three millions of dollars. The same is true of every State in the Union, in a greater or less degree, and of other countries also.

Not only has the Sabbath school done a world of

good in its own peculiar sphere, not only has it created a new era in the history of childhood and of education, but it has created a new era in the history of the church of God, of benevolence, and moral reformation. It has opened a thousand channels of light and of life throughout the whole body politic, which are the veins and arteries through which a tide of agencies is running to and fro, and increasing knowledge. It has given a fresh impulse to every form, phase, and agency of salvation. When it originated, nearly every institution adapted to promote the salvation of the world, slept in profound inefficiency.

"Night's sable goddess sat upon her ebon throne,
And swayed her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!"

Successive ages of deep gloom had hung over the world, and the institution of Mr. Raikes was like the rising of the sun upon the darkness; and, now, ere it has scarcely cleared the horizon, behold what a flood of light has been shed abroad, prophetic of a glorious day of illumination.

It is interesting to look back upon the changes which have occurred in the history and condition of the world since the Sabbath school took its origin. Some of the greatest improvements of modern times, yea, of *any* times, have been made, rendering this age more nearly like the apostolic age than any other since that time or before.

A celestial host have descended arm in arm from the realms of light, and are exploring and renovating the earth, lifting at all her foundations, presaging

her perfection and bliss, and these "lovely sisters of charity, and harbingers of better days," have rather followed than preceded the Sabbath school. During the seventy-five years since the origin of this institution, there has doubtless been greater advancement in literature, science, and art, in physical, intellectual, and moral freedom, in agricultural, commercial, mercantile, and mechanical enterprise, in evangelization and moral reformation, than for centuries and centuries before.

The Bible Societies, which are scattering their millions of Bibles through the earth, in two hundred different languages, made accessible to six hundred millions of the human race in their own tongues, with the design of placing a copy in the pathway of every living human being, and upon the pillow of all the dying.

The Tract Societies, which are scattering their multiplied millions of pages, strewing them like the first flowers of spring for verdure and fragrance, and like the leaves of autumn for number, all over the earth. And the Missionary Societies, that are exploring the nations of idolatry, causing light to spring up where darkness and the shadow of death hath rested long, carrying love, peace, and happiness into the habitations of cruelty, striking down the idols, temples, and altars of impiety, removing the vain traditions, the corrupt fables and precepts of the kingdom of darkness, setting up the true God, instituting the worship of heaven, and bringing the fallen race back to its primitive perfection. And the Abolition Society, whose work is to "undo the heavy burden, break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free;" to strike

the fetters from every human limb, and restore to all men the unalienable right of *liberty.* The Peace Society, speaking in heaven's own dialect to contending nations, reconciling their differences, and converting their murderous weapons into harmless and useful implements, binding up the wounds of war and unfurling the banner of universal peace. And the Temperance Society, whose strong arm, drawing its efficiency from the throne of justice, is uplifted to hold in abeyance the whelming floods of intemperance that desolate the earth, which, guided by wisdom and crowned with victory, is destined to crush the nefarious business of its traffickers, and convert the unnatural appetite of its victims.

These, and thousands of other benevolent enterprises, which reach forth a glowing, brimming hand of blessing to all classes, ages, sexes, and conditions of erring and suffering humanity; and thousands of physical enterprises that are abbreviating human labor, and augmenting human power, shortening time, annihilating distance, overcoming obstacles, multiplying wealth, increasing knowledge, developing light, producing pleasure, exhibiting the wonderful power of man, and moving the earth to physical, intellectual, and moral perfection, enhancing every time the earth turns over the power of man, the value of time, of money, of talents, and of life.

The whole earth, natural, mental, and spiritual, has by these movements been thrown into commotion and made to vibrate from foundation to dome, from centre to circumference; and has gained a momentum which will doubtless overcome, convert, and

carry forward with it every opposing element, till the earth reaches the goal of her destiny.

To what is this advancement attributable? To the Bible, undoubtedly; to the development of the light, truth, and power of the divine revelation! The Bible underlies the whole framework of modern improvement. Egypt is said to have supplied all the nations surrounding her with food, whilst Egypt herself was supplied from the banks of the river Nile, and the banks of the river were supplied from the Nile. The Bible is the Nile, the source, the foundation of all this advancement. We find these effects to be proportional to the possession of the light and power which men and communities have experienced from this source. And yet, God seems to have withheld the light of the gospel until it should dawn in the right direction. He appears to have held in abeyance all these instrumentalities for good, until the Sabbath school should pioneer the way; and many, if not all of these institutions, grow out of the Sabbath school, finding their necessity in it. Some of them were organized by its patrons. That stupendous institution — the "British and Foreign Bible Society" — was organized by a Sabbath school teacher. Some of these societies have been termed the "blooming daughters of the Sabbath school." Many of them originated in this institution, and *all* of them near the time or subsequently to the time of its origin, and all of them have found here a powerful ally and chief means of their operation and extension.

The Sabbath school would at once create the

necessity of Bible Societies, to furnish Bibles and Testaments; and Tract Societies, to publish tracts and books; and Missionary Societies to distribute, by their missionaries and colporteurs, their publications. These would create a necessity for the Abolition, Peace, and Temperance Societies, to prepare the way of approach to numerous classes hitherto inaccessible by the evangelist. These agencies would render Christian Union Associations indispensable, whose united hands should explore and bless the abodes of vice and misery at home, and bear the pure white light of truth in rainbow attractions to the realms of darkness abroad, trying the gates of fenced cities for admission, scaling their walls with the torch of truth, and illuminating the dungeons of heathenism. All these would make it necessary to enlarge the operations of the Press.

Christianity, shedding abroad her light more widely and clearly, would give fresh impulse to literature, and this to science and art; thus one institution would create and prepare the way for another, one effect produce another cause; action would create reaction. The church meanwhile would arise and shine, and the world awaken from her slumber of generations. And as we might suppose, God has made these extremities his opportunity. He has made his hand visible in all this.

The invention of printing has multiplied the number of Bibles and religious books from single copies to thousands, and reduced the price from dollars to cents. The discovery of the powers of steam and electricity has abbreviated time, annihilated distance, and brought remote cities and nations side

by side, and seated them face to face. The massive walls of cities have been thrown down, and their ponderous gates opened for the admission of the evangelist. The hearts and laws of heathen sovereigns have been changed so as to permit the promulgation of the Christian religion; and the spirit of God has begotten a Macedonian cry in the hearts of the teeming millions of heathenism, for Christianity to come over and help them, — sick and tired of their insipid, powerless, and meaningless ceremonies. And God has in his providence raised up a mighty host who have gone with flying feet and glowing hands to these waving fields, to break to them the bread of life, and preach the gospel of liberty; that the dominions of ignorance and oppression are breaking up, — their strong-holds giving way.

God is working with man to the accomplishment of great purposes; and every stone in this arch is a keystone, by which all the rest are sustained in their proper positions, and without which the arch would be evangelically deficient.

But there is one which is more emphatically a keystone, — that which lies at the base, which both unites and supports the whole. And as we have remarked, the Sabbath school, both in respect to time, utility, and necessity, is the fundamental institution; as it has been termed, "it is the pioneer, herald, and ally of all kindred agencies." It may even be said to embrace the Bible, tract, missionary, temperance, abolition, and peace enterprises; the ministry, the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the systems of libraries and colporteurs, all reduced to the best, the cheapest, most direct and effectual system, and

brought to bear upon its legitimate subjects at the most favorable time of any age from the cradle to the grave. Whilst their more enlarged operations are but the *extension* of this system. Said Gov. Washburn, "I might say that it (the Sabbath school) embraces in itself almost all the benevolent operations of the day. It combines the education of the young by schools, the Sabbath with its hallowed influences and associations, the Bible with its living, never-dying hopes and truths, without whose influences, direct or indirect, no free government can be sustained, no free State exist."

Says a Report of the Union: "All evangelical churches are enlarged through their Sunday schools, and the prosperity of the schools is generally an index of the prosperity of the churches to which they belong; and when new religious interests are established, a flourishing Sunday school is found an auspicious omen of success. Pastors, in building up churches upon the ordinances of the gospel, are placing living stones in the spiritual temple, which Sunday school teachers have been the means of polishing. Evangelists, going from village to village, and from city to city, winning souls to Christ, are gathering harvests which Sunday school teachers have sown in tears. Often extensive revivals follow in their train, and churches succeed to their establishment. There is not an agency of the gospel to which it is not imparting increased efficiency; nor an enterprise of the church to which it is not contributing the means of a vigorous prosecution. The Sunday school is guiding the success of all the ordinary, and even extraordinary means of grace; and, as the grand locomotive

of the gospel, is leading the whole train of religious institutions on to a millennial destination."

God, as we have remarked, withheld the light till it should dawn in the right direction. The Bible, as we have also remarked, is the cause of all this advancement. Yet we would say not the Bible merely, but the Bible in the right *time* and *place*, — the "word in season."

It is wisdom to prize and pursue objects according to their worth and importance; by this maxim, what is the responsibility which the Sabbath school imposes upon the civilized world, and especially upon the church of God? This will be apparent when we consider still further the effect and design of the institution. And we remark, first, that it is formative; it lays its creative hand at the very fountain and formation of the human heart, and of every principle of humanity. Its mission is to meet the rising race at the very opening of their pathway, to make them a heart and give them principles.

Secondly, — It is reformative; its design is to correct those who have been addicted to habits of vice, to reform the erring, to enlighten the benighted, and extend salvation to the lost; thus instrumentally creating "a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit."

Thirdly, — It is conservative; it is designed to hold the rising generations upon the foundation of truth, to preserve them amid the winds and currents of delusions, fanaticisms, and superstitions, which toss to and fro the unstable and unlearned.

Fourthly, — It is defensive; its strong arm, uplifted early and ever, is designed to hold back the powers of darkness, to stay the whelming waves of

evil, whilst it leads forth all the varied classes of the young through the rudiments of an intellectual, moral, and religious education; stretching forth its glowing hands and capacious arms to children of a larger growth, withholding not its celestial boon from those who are tottering on the verge of the grave.

The Sabbath school has designs for the *race*. It claims all souls for its dominion, of every age, sect, and condition,—pervading and perfecting all society from the child of years to the sire of scores. Like the sunlight and the atmosphere, it is designed for the world. Here is the soil, and this the season, to plant the tree of liberty, science, enterprise, peace, knowledge, and righteousness,—and this the hand to cultivate them. The Sabbath school has within its scope the history of nations, kingdoms, and empires; by implanting the principles of self-control, patriotism, and loyalty, it aims at the creation and perfection of principles and of institutions throughout all departments of society, of science and learning, of the world. It purposes with one hand to strike down business, enterprise, and morals, of the church and of and blot from existence the powers of unrighteousness, and with the other to set up and perfect the institutions of humanity and divinity. It looks with eyes of fire upon the desolations that *are*, and with equal intelligence upon the perfections that *should* be; it speaks in trumpet tones of warning and encouragement, and works with its multiplied hands, like the magician striking a hundred harps at once, with an aim to open the Bible to all the rising and risen generations of men; to root up the tares and garner the hopes of the world. Already a panoramic

view would exhibit thousands and tens of thousands of Sabbath schools, with hundreds of thousands of devoted teachers, and millions of eager scholars, scattered throughout every nation, kingdom, and people, and tongue; kindling kindred fires upon every mountain top and in every valley, reading their millions of pious publications, waiting with impatience the dawn, and hailing with transport the return of the sabbath, going up from the four winds to the sanctuary, to read the name, lisp the praises, and learn the will of the God who made them, preparing to shine in the day of the millennium, and shout the coming jubilee in anthems which shall shake the earth to her centre, and rend wide in response the gates of heaven; when the morning stars and sons of God shall sing again and shout for joy, and the Lord commands his blessing, even life forevermore. Already has it fixed one of its master hands firm upon the pillars of the temple of unrighteousnesss to its overthrow, while with the other it is opening to the world the gates of light and of life. Then let patriotism open her eye upon its merits; let civilization open her eye; let enterprise, science, and intelligence open their eyes; let the waking nations of oppression behold this hope, and let the church of God turn her eye fully in this direction; for here is the chariot of the Almighty passing triumphant through the earth, and he who would not be crushed beneath its rushing wheels in the day of battle, let him enter it and ride with him to victory.

CHAPTER IX.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

TEACHERS, to you emphatically applies the declaration of the adorable Saviour to his Father, "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them."

The glory of teaching God's will to men, of "doing good," reforming the vicious, correcting the erring, enlightening the benighted, and saving the lost, — "taking up little children and blessing them." These are the highest encomiums ever pronounced upon any being. And you are in the gracious providence of God honored, "exalted to heaven," in being permitted so closely to imitate the example of the great Teacher, — you are the proxies of the highest functionaries of the Christian church. O, how should your hearts respond to every divine precept, — how should your hands glow, and your feet hasten to do his will, — while every power of your being is called forth and consecrated to his service!

> "Delightful task, to rear the tender thought,
> To teach the young idea how to shoot;
> To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
> To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
> The generous purpose in the glowing breast."

Great the responsibility and honor of such a vocation; and blissful that eternity to be passed in tracing out the remote results of such a life.

My first proposition is, that children sustain to the world the relation of cause to effect. My second proposition is, that such being the relation of children to the world, the institution which blesses the children, blesses the world. My third proposition is, that those who labor to confer the blessings of such an institution upon the world, are her greatest benefactors; the earliest, most universal, and essential.

The position of the Sabbath school teacher is, therefore, peculiarly commanding and advantageous; he stands by the gates of Eden, and in the first step of their divergency receives the apostate tribes, and remands them back again to Eden, from whose blissful bowers and sublime summit, lie in full view, — fairer than the fabled "isles of Antilles," — the bright abodes of the millennial and heavenly state, before their eye is attracted, their hearts wedded, or their affections seduced to the world. He stands where his voice reverberates from Eden, echoes from Sinai, and reëchoes from Canaan. For children are the best copy of man before he tasted of the interdicted apple, and they are also the Christian's example. Faithfully laboring, you are gracing an institution whose towers are higher than the dome of the skies, and whose foundations are deeper than the pillars of the earth, whose influence is world wide, and whose results are eternal.

Consider two little children, alike physically, intellectually, and morally; hand in hand they run in the same path, they are pleased with the same objects,

delighted in the same amusements. In a few brief years, when these like children have developed their powers, and ascended the stage of active life, we then behold them at antipodes, — as unlike as light and darkness; they revolve around opposite poles, they face opposite destinies. *One* we find soaring to the summit, climbing from height to height through all the spheres, gradations, and perfections of humanity, and of human happiness. The *other*, alas! has fallen like a gem from the casket, like a star from its constellation, like the angels in light who through apostasy dropped from their sublime spheres, with dishevelled robes and marred hallelujahs, dashed down to chains and the bottomless pit.

We find this once blooming and innocent youth, plunging from depth to depth in all the degradations of human depravity and wretchedness, with severed attractions, crushed hopes, and thwarted destiny wide, and still widening from his early condition, and early companions, — and wherefore? Why such a difference in two who were so like? The reason is obvious. One was taught with the instructions, baptized with the influences, and pointed to the Lamb of God, by the hand of the Sabbath school. The other, less fortunate, was neglected and corrupted: one was educated in the school of virtue, the other of vice; one fed in the Lord's vineyard, the other roamed on Satan's common. Upon the heart of one there flashed from shining hands the light of truth and of duty, but over the throne of the other's, no luminous sceptre was stretched out to dissipate the darkness and shadows that rested there. It is the province of the Sabbath school teacher, under God,

to save *both* these children, and present them faultless before the throne with exceeding mutual joy.

There is a certain town in the "Granite State" where my memory and affections linger amid the sunny skies, silver streams, verdant vales, and rugged mountains, with richest, sweetest reminiscence; in that town the meeting-house was situated upon the height of land, so that the water which fell from the eastern roof was said to flow to the Atlantic ocean, that which fell upon the western to the Pacific. The same sun-rays lift these waters from their ocean bed, the same cloud-chariot and wind-steed bear them along the sky till they stand over this roof, when the brimming chalice is tipped, and the waters descend in mutual embrace, whilst the slight breeze bends the descending stream that it falls anon upon one side and upon the other of the ridge, and drops asunder upon the earth. But even then the child's finger may trace a passage and direct their union, changing the destiny of either or both; but they flow on to opposite rivers, and find their way to opposite oceans; they mingle with the depth, they roll over billows and dash through waves, careering onward till they break upon the shores of opposite oceans, and reach the remotest extremities of the earth, — never, never meeting again until the elements shall melt with fervent heat, until oceans cease to foam, their depths are dried up, and there is "no more sea." This is a faint illustration of the early union, the easy separation, and the eternity wide and differing destinies of children. While two walk exactly upon parallel lines, neither deviating, they do not separate; but from the moment one begins to

diverge from the line, every step removes him further away, and soon they travel in opposite directions. Two rail cars move side by side in their flight through the hills and valleys, and over the plains; but a slight switch changes the direction of one, and lo! they fly away out of each other's sight at opposite angles. And upon the railway of human life many, though slight, insidious, and treacherous, are the points where the youthful heart switches off from a career of integrity and uprightness, to one of infamy and ruin. It is but a step from untouched virtue to a course of unmitigated vice.

It is the province of the Sabbath school teacher to tend these switches, or rather to conduct the train; to warn, teach, and perfect every youth in all wisdom; and methinks these are the moments when the youthful "soul receives whole volumes on its unwritten leaves." It is yours to speak words which will warn of dangers, fix right thoughts, shape blissful destinies, and give direction to the wings of souls in their flight to immortality.

Be assured, yours are the glowing responsible hands which are laying broad and deep the foundations of the earth; fixing the pillars and placing the corner-stones of the world;—you are saying in the moral world as of old it was said in the physical, "Let there be light," and there is light. "Behold I create (instrumentally) new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,"—you are writing epitaphs on indestructible materials; you are moulding immortal forms which will bear the traces of your hands even in the presence of the Eternal; painting, like the celebrated Zeuxis, "for immortal-

ity;" — you are speaking words which are reporting at the throne of God, and going echoing on to eternity in all the melody of sound, awaking delights amid immortal years, — you are striking wires which will vibrate forever throughout the infinite realm of motion, — you are stirring up thoughts, awakening feeling, and setting in perpetual motion complicated machinery, — you are sowing seed which will spring up and grow till the harvest, the judgment, and yield fruit in Paradise; it is a solemn thought, that man can thus influence and effect a destiny of his fellow men to all eternity.

The stamp of the foot is said to shake the whole earth and move every particle of which it is composed; the disturbing of the water, by casting in a pebble, moves all the sea to its profoundest depths, widest extremes, and boundless circumference; the uttering of a single word moves all the particles of the atmosphere, goes on through time, circumvolving the earth and sea, and finds its prolonged echo in eternity. When the mystic meshes of enterprise shall be perfected, the earth intrusted with its ligaments, will be endowed with a sensitiveness which will render it impossible to strike a blow anywhere, and the effect not be felt everywhere. So morally; — each man is the centre of the world, and his actions affect all others directly or remotely. As the circling waves roll off from the point where the pebble strikes the ocean, following each other in quick succession till they break on the distant shores, so shall the principles which you shall perseveringly inculcate, extend till they have reached the utmost limits of human society. And childhood, of all

ages, is the period of innocency and susceptibility; it is the nearest back to Eden, and the furthest forward to the millennium; and they alone, are in advance of time and circumstances. Whilst the middle-aged are scarcely equal, and the aged are far in the rear. Here, then, is the right place and time to take hold of society, both to prevent and cure its evils; here, you may place the lever for the earth's adjustment; here, you may speak volumes in words, and illumine with the torch of lightning. A day in youth is worth many in manhood. An hour in life's opening, cancels ages in eternity; for how much in eternity one hour will decide and characterize! To lose this precious, palmy period, is to corrupt manhood, and throw a pall of gloom over the grave.

We should labor much harder for children than for any other department of society; because they have a much longer time to live to enjoy and improve those instructions.

It is the duty of depositors to make investments where they will be most safe, sure, and profitable. Where, in all the river's course, will efforts to rescue a drowning man be most effectual? At the source, where the waters are shallow, the stream narrow, the current slow and feeble, and when the victim has but just fallen overboard, while as yet he is not surfeited or overwhelmed with the waters, but retains his consciousness, his ability to combat with the waves, and struggle fiercely in the right direction for release? Is this the crisis, the eventful moment to save the sinking man, or is it after he has floated far down the stream, toward the dreadful precipice,

where there is no bottom or banks within his reach, where he flies swiftly along with the current, and whirls with the circling eddies, with little of consciousness, strength, or life remaining, while every moment he rapidly nears the destructive cataract? You may cry aloud to him, you may throw ropes, send boats, and hazard your own life; *possibly* you may save him, probably you will not; but should you save him, he is but a wreck, ruined perchance by his rapid descent down the rough passage. So in the stream of human life; fleet, perilous, and accelerating, our momentum, our velocity, and consequently our difficulty of stopping and retracing our steps, or of being rescued, is proportionate to our distance down the stream.

The history of redemption is therefore written of the young; and while efforts for restoration are so much more effectual here, how much better it is for those who are rescued.

Religion is worth more to a child than it is to an adult; money, counsel, character, are worth much more in youth than in advanced life. One hundred dollars are worth as much at ten years of age, as five thousand would be at the age of seventy. And wherefore? Because one hundred dollars, put at interest, would amount to five thousand at the age of seventy, at the common rate of compound interest; and in trade it would probably amount to much more. Character is worth more to the youth than it would be when he is advanced in life; if he is destitute of character till he has lived threescore and ten years, it will be of very little importance; it will do him but little good. Now it is capital; it is better

than "great riches,"—its trumpet voice will ever speak; like leaven it will spread and prepare his way before him; it will introduce, sanction, and bless him; it will be his

"Oracles in doubt,
His wings in flight of high pursuit."

It will open through this world a pathway of usefulness, happiness, and honor;—it is his *life*. Good counsel is worth more to the youth, when a prudent hand may check "budding ills," than when his ear and heart are callous, and he has become a victim to the destroyer. It is better to throw a guard about the baby's cradle, than to sing a psalm at a bad man's death-bed; better to have a care while the bud is bursting to the sun, than when the heat has scorched the heart of the unguarded blossom. "A stitch in time," often saves more than "nine." "An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure." Counsel the enslaved inebriate to dash to earth the fatal bowl; your advice, though good, had been *better* ere he tasted the poisonous cup; counsel the suicide after the fatal blade has made a passage for the life blood, you speak too late; seize and hold back the man of passion, after he has dealt the fatal blow. Speak within the prison walls, and counsel its abandoned *men* to integrity; better had you spoken in the Sabbath school, and counselled its guileless *children* to integrity. "Cry aloud" to the hardened and wretched sinner; better that you had *whispered* to him when you could say, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." It is not the word merely, but the "word in *season*" that is

good. Religion is worth as much more in youth than in old age, as all the good one might do in this world by a religious life; all the evils he might avoid, the treasure he might lay up in heaven, the souls he might save instrumentally, and the glory he might bring to God; it is worth as much more, as certainty in this great matter is preferable to uncertainty, for delays are *dangerous*.

The prodigal's father did well to receive and bless at last his returning son, but he had done *better*, had he prevailed on him not to have departed at first. The teacher does gloriously to point to the Lamb of God and secure, upon the eve of his dying day, the salvation of the gray-headed sinner, wrecked and ruined by iniquity, whose "heartstrings of steel becomes soft as sinews of the new-born babe;" who, rising like the Phœnix from its ashes, gathers up the shattered fragments of his being, and lays them at the feet of the Redeemer; by the magic of whose gracious power and the wand of whose gracious words, he becomes a new creature; is changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality, from death to life, and "from the power of Satan unto God;" thus making the day of his death better than the day of his birth. But that teacher does far more gloriously, who, upon the morn of his accountable day, points an unscathed, unmutilated, and uncorrupted youth to the Lamb of God; and secures the salvation of *his* soul; whose strong arm, firm foot, stout heart, and mighty energies, shall be able not only merely to receive salvation, but to impart it to others, and consecrate his vigorous powers to the divine ser-

vice. I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say. We are exhorted to seek for grace to help in time of need. There are especial times of need. We have remarked that religion is worth more in the morn of life's evil, perilous, transitory day, than at the close. So it is worth more in brief time, than in vast eternity; more in life than in death, in health than in sickness, in prosperity than in adversity. At first thought it seems impossible to conceive of a time when the mercy, the grace of God, is any more needful than when man stands before God in judgment. When he is arraigned at the awful assize, the bar of justice; that eventful occasion to which all other occasions have related, and which is the crisis of his endless destiny. When the light of justice is flashing all around him, and penetrating through him, when he is stripped of every disguise and bereft of every help, when the book of God and the book of conscience reveal their fearful record, when truth is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and the justice of the Almighty in full and boundless sway, performs an act, in reference to which he has performed all other acts relating to man. O, then it is, that the shrinking, shuddering soul will need the other great counterbalancing attribute of mercy. Mercy, which will hold back the rod of vengeance and sword of justice, wipe away the fearful record and deliver him from the condemnation which justly awaits him, laying around the trembling mortal the arms of support, and smiling on him approvingly. Death, too, — the payment of the debt man owes to justice, is a time that tries the soul, it is the king of terrors, and the terror of

kings: then man needs the favor of his God; when the nerveless grasp is dropping its possessions, and all earth is receding from his swimming vision, in that dread moment when time and eternity meet, — when he closes his eyes upon this world and opens them upon other scenes; when he steps from the crumbling brink of earth into the untried, uncertain, fearful future; when he wades down into the deep, swelling Jordan of Death, and all around is dark and fearful.

Affliction, too, is a time of need; when the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint.

Adversity, too, — when riches take wings and fly away, when friends forsake and the sources of pleasure fail, when the stars fall from the crown of honor, the sceptre departs, and the mantle is rent to shreds.

These, *these* are times when we need God's blessing. But what are all these compared with blooming, vigorous, energetic youth? For the blessing which the child needs, will prepare him for all these emergencies; for affliction, death, judgment, and eternity, as well as for life, prosperity, and usefulness. And, be assured, religion is never worth less to a man than on the day he dies; and from the first step over the line of accountability to that fatal day, every neglected hour draws upon the treasury of his present usefulness and future happiness.

Youth is emphatically the time when God's blessing is needed. And feeding the lambs, and carrying them in our bosom, is a work most divine and godlike, an enterprise the most sublime and glorious; the surest in its success, the richest in its reward, and most transcendently vast in its results. And

when the deeds of heroes shall be passed over in silence, or mentioned with reprobation, when poets with their poesy, and philosophers with their researches, orators with their genius, the rich with their coffers, the great with their crowns, (except such as have been consecrated to truth and righteousness,) sink undistinguished into one common abyss; the holy, useful Sabbath school teacher, accompanied by the juvenile band, whose hands he has washed and whose hearts he has clothed for immortality, shall stand up before the throne amid the applause of an assembled universe, and receive his starry crown. Nor shall the mighty hosts of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, evangelists, reformers, martyrs, ministers, and people, pressing for their crowns, throw him into obscurity, or deprive him of his reward; but the eye of all shall be turned towards him, eternity itself shall swell with his praise, and dwell with increasing rapture on his name. Only of the body is it said, "we brought nothing into this world, and we can carry nothing out." The soul carries up in its arms through the eternal portals all that it has received, accomplished, or wrought in its earthly pilgrimage, whether good or evil.

Let these weighty considerations take hold of your souls, lift them up and baptize them with the spirit of holy fortitude, Christian enterprise, and moral heroism. Let the zeal of the highway and hedge missionary descend into your hearts; go forth into the lanes and streets, and seek to save those who have no guiding fathers and mothers; they are the wards of the church of Christ, your wards, spiritual foundlings laid at your doors, orphans

with the worst sort of orphanage, that which is spiritual. As you love your own children, and prize the salvation of your own souls and that of others, so labor to make them partakers of like precious hopes, until there shall not be a child in your neighborhood, village, or ward, who shall not have taken your benevolent hands, heard your celestial voices, and felt your kindly heart-pulses. Having the freest and most direct access to the homes of the people, and to the affection and confidence of the children, you have the power to extinguish innumerable little volcanoes of personal and social, domestic and public evil. There are few hearts, even in the lowest grades of our community, in which some tender chord may not be awakened by the voice of Christian sympathy. And no more exquisite earthly reward can be asked by the servant of God, on such an errand, than to be concious that his or her voice has touched it. He who does this is as certainly bearing a part in the sublime enterprise of converting the world to Christ, as he who leaves all the endearments of home to plant the cross amid polar snows or burning sands.

Let the command apply to you, "Be fruitful and multiply," and replenish the realms of light, sowing beside all waters, in the morning and in the evening. Take up this heavy burden and esteem it light for Jesus' sake; say, in Scripture language, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord."

It is much better to say *come*, than *go;* it is much better to say *see*, than *hear*, — see *my* zeal, than another's; and "zeal for the Lord," is the sublimest style of human action. You will feel the impor-

tance and learn the art of adapting your instructions to the capacity and condition of each child. As children, like adults, are individuals and mutually unlike, so they need personal instruction and adaptation. We are taught by apostolic example to deal with human souls separately and privately, — to warn every man, and teach every man. In writing to the Thessalonians, St. Paul states, that beside discoursing to large congregations, he had exhorted and comforted and warned every one of them, as a father does his children. "Everybody knows that a parent communicates with the members of his family separately, as well as unitedly, and often becomes personally familiar and minute in his inquiries and directions. Nor does the tutor, engaged to direct the studies of youth, satisfy himself with merely delivering a number of elaborate lectures to them all in common, without ever conversing with each pupil separately and alone, never testing their actual individual attainments by familiar and minute inquiry, or making any private or personal efforts to stimulate and direct the mind of each.

"Medical men, in our public hospitals, do not satisfy themselves with collecting all the patients in the establishment into one room, and then giving them some general directions, more or less applicable to them all. Each patient undergoes a separate examination, and is subjected to a peculiar mode of treatment. Gentlemen who aspire to the honor of a seat in Parliament, not merely deliver speeches in public, but also institute a private canvass; and were this separate application to the electors to be omitted, success would very seldom be even expected.

"Private and personal communication in the department of morals and religion, is of still more urgent and paramount importance. Minds, like locks, have different and often difficult wards; the same key will not open them all, yet by a skilful locks-man all may be opened. A Sunday school may be considered as a plantation of young minds, the trees of which radiate in a different manner, and blossom at various times; each of them requiring a method of culture adapted to its nature. Some need to be brought forward to the sun; others to be thrown back to the shade. Some need to have their luxuriant growth repressed; others to have it encouraged."

No two pupils are precisely alike, and hence no precise and undeviating course of discipline should be adopted, but a constant effort should be to have an adaptedness to individual circumstances and wants. Hence, the instructor must avail himself of every means to find out all the faults and excellences, the strong and weak points of his pupil's character, — their temptations, their predilections, their difficult and easy processes. In short, he must study them symptomatically, as a faithful and discriminating physician does his patients, to know what they are, what they may become, and what ought to be done for them.

"A teacher of small children," says a writer, "should be a sort of locomotive patent office, full of all manner of inventions. The young love novelty as much as they hate routine. To secure their interest, therefore, one must excite their astonishment and admiration every hour of every day in the week, with some new thing under the sun.

"It is to be feared that too many teachers are without *science* in their business, having neither *ingenuity* nor *invention.* But like a set of empirics, have a certain nostrum which they administer in every case, without ever varying the application; they proceed with a command, a threat, and a blow; and if this does not succeed, the case is abandoned as desperate; whereas a little variation in the mode of treatment would have carried the point, and insured success." The great former of our minds has himself told us the secret springs whereby we may work upon it effectually. He has suggested *love* as the clue to the labyrinth, — the torch to illumine the way to its hidden recesses, — the key by which the harp of a thousand strings is to be attuned. Mr. Charles, one of the most successful teachers in Wales, says, "For years I have laid it down as a maxim to guide me, never to give up an object in despair of success. If one way does not succeed, new means must be tried; and if I see no increase this year, perhaps I may the next. I almost wish to blot the word *impossible* from my vocabulary, and obliterate it from the minds of my brethren." Mr. Raikes once exclaimed, "I can never pass by the spot where the word *try* came so powerfully into my mind, without lifting up my hands and heart to heaven, in gratitude to God for *having put such a thought into my heart!*" You are to become all things to all men. Like the skilful painters you must stretch line after line, stroke upon stroke, till you bring out the picture you are anxious to produce.

CHAPTER X.

THE REFLEX GOOD TO SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

THE *reflex* influence alone upon every Sabbath school teacher, is a sufficient motive for devotion to your vocation; in seeking to qualify yourselves to impart ideas to the young, you will greatly expand your own minds.

"Teaching we learn." A hunger and thirst will be excited for knowledge, truth, and grace. In the Sabbath school library, we find epitomized the essence of all the voluminous and valuable literature of the day, the biographies of eminently great and good Christians, who have filled high places in church and State, while others record the examples of devoted youths. All the graces of the spirit, and all the tempers of the heart that God approves, the great purposes of life, and the most successful means of overcoming temptation, are here illustrated, both by pen and print.

The purest and most wholesome literature, pointed and pungent, yet attractive and popular, beautiful and appropriate in style, adapted to the head and heart. The world of nature, art, and science, is expanded before the admiring gaze, and all its diversities are made eloquent and practical teachers of righteousness, Thus the hunger and thirst which is

excited is satiated. It is therefore stated that while the proportion of teachers to children is as one to six, the proportion of teachers converted during their connection with the Sabbath school to that of scholars, is as five to six. Five hundred teachers are reported as converted in one year in a single denomination. According to the promise, he that watereth shall be watered, and he that planteth a vineyard shall be partaker of the fruit, and according to the proverb, those who bear the torch through gloom and darkness, shall illumine their own way; and often the double victory of mutual conversion has crowned the faithful labors of the Sabbath school teacher.

"There is no one class of persons," says a report, "of whom so large a proportion become professors of Christianity. This is a fact verified by the undeniable statistics of all denominations. It may therefore be alleged, as established by experience and observation, that he who becomes a Sunday school teacher does, in a peculiarly hopeful manner, put himself within the influence of the means of grace."

To teach is a *work*, and like other work, is the mother of vigor. "To work," says Carlisle, "what incalculable sources of cultivation lie in that process, in that attempt! How it lays hold on the whole man; not of a small theoretical calculating fraction of him, but of the whole, practical, daring, doing, enduring man, thereby to awaken dormant energies, root out old errors at every step. He that has done nothing has known nothing." "Few occupations are so good a mental discipline as teaching, for few are so suited to detect a man's deficiency in respect

to exactness, information, attention, readiness, and expression, as well as to make them stare him in the face." When he thus becomes conscious of one error, he cannot fail to suspect himself of *more*, and to give all diligence lest he be a blind leader of the blind.

Endeavors to make known what he knows, not only stimulates the teacher to make up his deficiencies in exactness, information, attention, readiness, and expression, by causing these broken links in the golden chain of his culture to haunt him continually, but they confer a blessing directly, even while they are being made. They stamp whatever he imparts more deeply in his own memory, "as streams their channels deeper wear." Old familiar truths may become new to a teacher, because they are new to his pupils. Their new-born delight as knowledge dawns upon them, rejuvenates his superannuated emotions, as with morning freshness. Moreover, through the answers and questions of learners, new ideas, or hitherto undetected lations of old ideas, flash upon the teacher's mind.

"Children," says Dr. Johnson, "should always be encouraged to tell some brother, sister, or servant what they hear, and that immediately, before the impression is erased by the intervention of new occurrences." We have an account of a French grammarian, who, though a broker, was led to analyze grammatical principles, by educating in his leisure hours his own daughters. The Cicero of our own senate, for whom we still pine with lamentings, testifies that the secret of his copious eloquence was his daily habit of making known what he knew, if

not to men, women, and children, at least to horses and oxen, or even stumps and corn-stalks. And the words of Luther are, "I am one of those, who have made progress by instructing others." It is scarcely possible to speak or let the thoughts dwell often on goodness without catching something of its spirit; and what at first was but the faint reflection of a devout mind, acquires in time, through divine grace, the consistency and strength of a genuine Christian principle; "by beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, and from glory to glory."

And recollect, dear teachers, in all your endeavors in the Sabbath school, you are to aim at the conversion of each child; not merely to make them mighty in the Scriptures, to teach them theories, forms, and creeds, to feed their fancy or gratify their morbid affections. Your sphere is as far above this, "as the angel flying through the midst of heaven, is above the traveller who is toiling across the low and sandy desert." You are to point them to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" — to bring them into communion with God, and felt contact with the church; to give such a direction to all the tendencies of the soul, as to apply truth to the understanding, the conscience, the heart, the memory, and the imagination; so to appeal to the hopes and to the fears of the child, that the result will be, by the grace of God, he will become thoroughly imbued with the Christian doctrine, and influenced by Christian principles. "To impart religious knowledge, to produce those religious impressions, and to form those religious habits in the minds of the children,

which shall be crowned with the *salvation of their immortal souls.* Or, in other words, to be instrumental in producing that conviction of sin, that repentance towards God, that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that habitual subjection in heart and life to the authority of the Scriptures which constitute at once the form and power of *genuine godliness.*" To train them up in the way of sincere and undefiled religion, is an object of such immense importance, that compared with this, an ability to read and write, or even all the refinements of life, have not the weight of a feather in their destiny.

"Sunday schools, to be contemplated in their true light, should be viewed as *nurseries for the church of God;* as bearing an intimate connection with the unseen *world;* and is ultimately intended to people the realms of glory with the "spirits of just men made perfect." To judge of their value by any lower estimate; to view them merely as adapted to the perishing interests of mortality, is to cast the institution into the balances of Atheism; to weigh them upon the sepulchre; and to pronounce upon their value, without throwing eternity into the scale."

Union to God is the soul and success of all true efforts. This was the object for which God instituted the counsels of eternity. The Son of God veiled his divinity in human flesh, — lower than the angels, — tabernacled amidst the sorrows of mortality, and closed a life of humiliation and suffering upon the cross; for this object the Holy Ghost was sent, all the dispensations of grace, all the labors of patriarchs, prophets, priests, and apostles were arranged; and if you aim not at this result, your efforts will be

misdirected, your failure will be signal, and the consequences fatal. You will therefore labor to produce *religious impressions*, as well as communicate religious instruction. To change the mind and produce a holy bias; to create a new disposition; to turn all the affections into a new channel, and cause them to flow towards God and heaven, is the work of the omnipotent and eternal Spirit.

But in the execution of his purposes he generally employs means and instrumentalities. You must sow the seed in its season with the diligence of the husbandman, and then exercise like him an unlimited dependence upon the influences of the heavens, for it is God that giveth increase to the labors of both. A spirit of earnest prayer should be the living soul of all your conduct; while your eye is fixed upon the children, your heart should be lifted up to God. You should sit down as between them and the fountain of life, and give out the instruction of an elder sister as at the very footstool of the throne of God, and while opening by instruction a channel to their hearts, seek to draw the living stream by prayer from heaven.

Hang the interests of the school upon his arm, and lay them at his feet; let the solemn air of eternity, with the beams of heavenly glory be visible upon your countenance, while the meekness of Jesus and the mercy of his gospel is breathed forth in all your language. While by all that is awful and pathetic in religion, admonish and exhort the children. Endeavor to awe them by the terrors of the Lord, and melt them by his mercies. Roll over them the thunders of Mount Sinai, and display to them the

moving scenes of Mount Calvary. Remind them of their mortality, and encircle their imagination with the scenery of the judgment day. Seize every event that the dispensation of Divine Providence may furnish, to aid your endeavors. Relate to them instances of early piety, and, at other times, cases of sudden and alarming dissolution. Watch for the appearance of religious concern, as that which can alone reward your labors, or satisfy your desires. Over every other kind of excellence than true religion, exclaim, "Ah! 'tis well, 'tis good, so far as it goes, but I want the fruits of immortality."

When these begin to show themselves, hail the first buds of genuine religion with delight, shield them with a fostering care, and with a skilful hand direct their growth. Recollect that you can never buy truth too dear, nor sell it too cheap. And may the Spirit of the Holy One smile on and bless your pious endeavors. And finally, in order to secure the converting grace of God to the children under your charge, and thus *succeed* in your celestial work, it is indispensable that you yourselves be partakers of the grace of God; that you be sanctified through the truth. "Thou, therefore, that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?"

"Take care that the light in thee be not darkness." How can you expect to write the laws of God upon the hearts of children, while you feel that they are not legibly transcribed upon your own? If you would have power with man, you must have power with God. That your face may reflect wisdom, you must be under the direct rays of the divine countenance; that you may be the track along which

flashes the pure light, the channel through which flow the fresh blessings of God's throne, you must be attached to that throne; if you would have your arms charged with omnipotence, you must take hold of omnipotence. How can you expect to place deep and sure in the hearts of children the truths of the Bible, which are the great foundation stones of the moral temple, unless you have measured them by your own experience?

What sane man would assume the command of a ship freighted with valuable merchandise, and more valuable lives, without possessing a proper acquaintance with the principles of navigation and seamanship? The omission or misplacing of a single figure might make a difference of thousands of dollars in the result. How can a mind, ignorant of its own structure and of its own powers, and unskilled in wielding the energies with which God has endowed it, hope to succeed in developing the structure, unfolding the powers, and directing the energies with which he has endowed the minds of others? Especially, how can such a mind hope to succeed in applying this training to the mind of *childhood* and *youth*, when so many of its faculties lie in a manner *latent*, and need to be *detected* and *called forth*, before they can be impressed, moulded, and fashioned for God? For to reach, interest, and affect the mind of the young with the truths of religion, is work for the noblest, best trained powers of manhood. How can you teach an unknown God? How can you represent that Saviour as a pearl of great price, which to you is a stone of stumbling? Can you illustrate in what manner principles of divine truth should con-

strain the conscience and engage the affections, how they should become the elements of a new existence, and be breathed into the soul as the breath of spiritual life, without experimental religion? "No unskilful hand should ever play upon a harp when the tones are left for ever in the strings." No bird is like a living bird to tempt others into the net. The mightiest weapons of man, which thrice arm him with truth, are his secret armor. The shaft that would cut its way through the ice and iron of human depravity, and probe the depths of the soul, must be pointed and polished by heaven.

"A drop of grace has been declared to be better than a sea of gifts." You may pile the fuel mountain high, and unless you can breathe into it the principle of flame, unless you can touch it with the finger of fire there will be no combustion. The laws of nature forbid a harvest without the seed, and also that the stream should rise higher than its source. Nor will your instructions be likely to raise men above their level, your moral hearts. The thermometer of their affections will rise no higher than the caloric of your piety will make it rise. Men are sympathetic, they feel as others feel; it is only when they are fired with energy themselves, that they energize all around them. Like the Leyden jar which only when charged to a plenum, and coming in contact with dead things or lifeless men, emits sparks sufficiently potent to electrize them into celerity. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Man as legitimately exerts influences in accordance with the character he has formed morally, mentally, and physically. If the character of his mind, from which

these influences proceed are impure, corrupt, and vicious, what process of filtration exists between the teacher and child, which can possibly prevent this moral putridity from being transferred to the latter? If the teacher be of an opposite character, such, also, will be the influence he will exert upon the child. There are many schools, however, where pious teachers cannot be obtained, where persons of ability, devoted zeal, and *moral* worth, must be employed, though these qualifications are not united with decision of religious character. We find convicts in our prisons teaching classes of their fellow-prisoners within these walls of justice with considerable success; though they are doubtless often thoroughly reformed men.

"Men who are not inwardly Christians may be useful in promoting the subordinate ends of this institution, by performing the humbler duties of this spiritual husbandry, of gathering out the stones and preparing the soil for the good seed;" and they *may* reach the object which is ultimate and supreme. These exceptions are instances where God literally chooseth the "foolish things of the world, base things, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." But experimental knowledge and acquaintance with the science taught, should certainly be the rule of qualification for the teacher in order for the blessing of God, and also for the confidence of the children; for a haughty or indifferent demeanor will quickly alienate their minds and render them intractable; and no counterfeit of the graces will answer; an imitation of this part of duty

will be unavailing, for children are nice observers. They understand as it were instinctively the real feelings of those who have the charge of them; they read the language of the eye, and keenly observe all the nameless indications of unaffected kindness and grace. If, therefore, you would with the finger of Omnipotence strike the master spring of the human soul, and cause it to vibrate for immortality, you must be "endued with power from on high." "And a teacher of this stamp, walking in the Eden garden of childhood, will never be in his school as a flower blushing unseen in the desert, or a gem in an unfathomed ocean cave. His industry, enthusiasm, and still baffled but still renewed endeavor, will awaken still responsive echoes in his pupils, though his circle be broader than theirs. Contagious virtue will go out of him. Then he will be ever before them as a cluster of Eshcol, ripe, purple, gushing,—alluring them towards the land of learning whence it came. Here is the secret of success; they make scholars because *they* are scholars; their tones, gestures, words, pronunciations, casual sayings, and classic taste, insensibly permeate and leaven the whole lump."

CHAPTER XI.

THE RESPONSIBLE AND HONORED POSITION OF SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

It is an important consideration that our churches are already in the hands of Sabbath school teachers; they give character and create the passion and feelings of our churches. None can doubt that Sabbath school teachers, before and after the conversion of their scholars, have much more to do in forming their moral principles and habits, than the pulpit can possibly effect; their instructions are more frequent, direct, and personal. The Sabbath school may be considered the outer court of the temple, the primary department of religious education; and the Sabbath school teacher is the initiatory officer, he watches at the temple gates, and makes his mark first and deepest. How important, then, that our teachers who thus bear the vessels of the Lord, have clean hands; that they be living exemplifications of the power of vital godliness.

Let them believe and teach error, and the church cherishes in her bosom an infant Hercules, whose club will shortly be used in beating and killing his own mother. Let them feed the children from the vine of Sodom, and clusters from the vineyard of

Gomorrah, and we have a power of antagonism growing up in our midst, which is irresistible. Like an ill-going town clock that deceives a whole town, so they lead whole societies astray. Teachers must be taught and indoctrinated, that they may feel the ground on which they tread is firm, that their path is through light and under sunshine; for the safety of our churches, their stability, permanency, order, purity, knowledge, all, under God, depend upon the character of the Sabbath school. Hence the vast importance of having at the head of our Sunday school classes, not theologians or polemics, but plain men and women of ripe Christian experience, — rooted and grounded in the faith once delivered to the saints, — mighty in the Scriptures, — apt to teach, — patient, constant, faithful. It has been said that moral teaching produces all other teaching, and is reproduced *in* all others, and that Sabbath school teachers should therefore bring into the school-room every thing which the children will afterwards need in the world; the whole of Christianity; its precepts, its doctrines, its duties; involving all they owe to God; to their parents, their teachers, their friends, their country, and all mankind. Such teachers will not regard the children under their care merely as creatures that are to be fed and clothed and gradually to become profitable; they will not regard the teaching of a Sabbath school class as a piece of job work, like the sawing of a load of wood, to be done with little or no thought at the time, and then forgotten; nor will they find a moment's leisure time in the brief space allotted them to minister to the transcendent wants of the human soul, and fit it for never ending

duration; which often amounts to less than an hour in a week, while thirty or more times as much are given at the secular school, for the merest elements of an education whose object is to fit the child for the concerns of his short life on earth!

Upon the steps of Sabbath school teachers hang imperishable destinies! The great question between a holy and powerful Timothy, or a treacherous and ruined Judas, betraying his Saviour for worldly considerations, trembles upon the fluctuating will of youth, during the years the children remain within the precincts of these religious schools. And in the ultimate choice, how much will depend upon the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the teacher.

Yours, dear teachers, is an immortal charge, a heaven-imposed responsibility. The travail of a Saviour's soul is intrusted to your care; the nursing of the church, the shaping and the ornamenting of the materials which are to constitute the church of the future; not a church of shows, but of realities; not of confessionals, absolutions, and priestly mysticisms, such as some desire, but a church founded on the divine word; whose bulwarks shall be manned by believers, who have been made free by the truth, who know and defend it; a church which shall dispense what she receives; a Bethsaida for the poor, the halt, the maimed, the blind, the refuges of sin of all castes and nations.

What other occupation is of such momentous importance? *Physical* education is important; but it reaches only indirectly beyond the *body*.

Intellectual education is important, but it does not necessarily reach the mind in *eternity*.

Moral education is *most* important, because it is that religious training which the soul feels forever. The governing of the State is important; the preaching of the gospel is important; but these, after all, with all their mighty cares and responsibilities, are but the bringing out or the managing of results, which look for their *origin* in the impressions and the workings felt in the mind of *youth*. The religious training of the young transcends in importance all other occupations, just as the *originating* of effects is more important than their mere *management*.

It is not so momentous a work to govern, as it is to say what materials we shall *have* to govern. It is not so important a concern even to preach the everlasting gospel, as it is to say to what susceptibilities the gospel shall be preached. The men who have improved and adorned their country by the splendid creations of their genius, have had their names emblazoned in the temple of fame, and received all the glory which admiring generations could confer upon their memory.

But what is the honor of adorning a city with the classic productions of the chisel or pencil, and filling it with temples, statues, and paintings, compared with the more useful labor of causing the increase and reign of righteousness, and of erecting temples within the soul, wherein the divine influences of heavenly love may delight, and multiplying in the abodes of dreary poverty the image of peace, cheerful acquiescence and love to God? In imparting such spiritual and moral benefits, you are conferring a good which shall be perpetuated through infinite ages, after the fashion of this world hath passed away forever.

The pearl-diver labors long and hard for the object of his search, but the rich gem which he brings up will shine on, when the hand that sought it is palsied in death and lost in the dust. It may be the rich boon of Providence to some poor widow, or the goal of an industrious and frugal life; possibly it may deck the brow of a king, sparkle in the gaudy palace, or adorn the consecrated temple.

Let Cadmus give letters to Greece, and Prometheus bring fire from heaven, and Ceres give corn to men, and Franklin and Fulton stamp their names upon the elements as benefactors to their race. But the Sunday school missionary has conferred a blessing on the community, whose influences will not have ceased when the elements shall melt with fervent heat. "And a time is fast arriving when it will be seen and felt, that to have been instrumental in conferring spiritual good upon a single soul, is a brighter and more lasting glory than the most solid achievements of philosophy, or the most splendid discoveries of science.

"Yours is a work connected with all that is lovely and of good report in this world, and all that is glorious in the world to come. Compare it with the motives which lead to other lines of action, and with their results. The aspiration of the mere politician begins and ends in himself. The benefits conferred on his supporters, have no higher motive than this. The same remark will apply to many who are engaged in the pursuits of commerce, or in the prosecution of enterprises which ordinarily lead to the accumulation of individual and national wealth. They may become great in this respect, and advance

the wealth of their country, without being exemplary themselves, or increasing the public virtue. And so of professional renown. How empty is that bauble which entwines the brow of the orator in the senate, at the bar, or in the pulpit, whose heart is not full of the kindly feelings of humanity, and who does not endeavor to mitigate the sufferings and increase the happiness of his race.

"Let it be manifest, then, by your diligence, that you are not insensible of your privileges. While the warrior is pressing through human misery to pluck his blood-stained laurels, and thinks little of the hazard of his life in the pursuit; while the author, by intense study, is wasting his strength to gain literary fame; while the artist is laboring for the applause of futurity; be it your object to do good to the present and eternal interests of your fellow-creatures; for in such a career, your ambition is pursuing a loftier flight than all the rest, and ascending into regions far elevated above the highest pinnacle of the temple of fame." Among the ancient pagans, it was a title of the highest honor to be termed a benefactor; hence the apostle argues that "for a good man some would even dare to die."

"To love the public, to study the universal good and to promote the interest of the world as far as in our power, is surely the highest goodness, and constitutes that temper which we call divine." In this consists the true honor of your employment; for in your work, you are godlike. And the good you do, is not merely of a temporal nature. To feed the hungry is a noble work; so also to clothe the naked, to heal the sick, and shelter the aged. The name of

the philanthropist shines with a purer and brighter glory on the page of history than any other. If it is so exalted a work to do good to the body, how much greater the distinction to relieve the miseries and establish the interest of the immortal spirit; to render our fellow-creatures happy in themselves, and a blessing to others; to fit them for the communion of heaven, after having taught them to be the humble ornament of society on earth! Meditate, therefore, upon the worth of souls; call up the interests of more worlds than one which depend almost entirely upon religious instruction, and then say if you ought not to blush at the thought of retreating. Did the Son of God labor through a life of poverty, agonize in a death of torture for immortal souls, and will you cast from you their interests because a little sacrifice of time and ease is required on the Sabbath? Is it not enough that you are employed as the almoners of God's richest gifts, and engaged for the benefit of immortal interests? The loftiest seraph that glows and burns in the temple above, if commissioned by his God, would accept with gratitude the office you hold. And consider, too, that ministers and missionaries, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, the wise and good of every age, labored for the same object which you pursue.

Sabbath schools are sustained by the enterprise, sacrifice, and charities of men high in rank. Chief Justice Marshall and Judge Washington were both of them the friends and patrons of Sabbath schools. The late President Harrison, for several years taught a class in the Sabbath school on the banks of the Ohio, and continued to do so until the Sabbath pre-

vious to his leaving home to assume the responsibilities of the high office to which he was called by the voice of the people. Hon. Samuel Hubbard of Boston, one of the judges of the Supreme Court, was a Sabbath school teacher. Governors of States and their wives, members of congress, and professors in colleges, have not deemed it beneath them to teach children lessons of piety.

Says the president of Oglethorpe University, Georgia, "In our southern States, a considerable number of the very first and most intelligent and refined men and women of our respective communities, are teachers in Sunday schools. On a visit to the North a few summers since, I made a considerably extended inspection of Sunday schools. I visited a Sunday school in this city, (Philadelphia). My friend pointed out to me a teacher, and added, 'that is the mayor of our city.' I went to New Jersey, and there I found the governor of the State at the head of his Sunday school class. I visited another village in that State, and there sat an illustrious and eloquent United States senator at the head of his class. In still another village, an aged doctor of divinity was found on Sabbath morning in the Sunday school, imparting to his class of children the words of wisdom which belong to gray hairs. I visited New England; and in one of those States I found a governor a Sunday school teacher. And men of all ranks and offices, and women of the highest circles, were here laboring to impart instruction to the infant mind. I do not mean to intimate that they honored the Sunday school so much as they honored themselves. They did not stoop to

their work. No, the governor rises above the gubernatorial chair, when he enters upon such a vocation. Angels from heaven would feel honored to be sent into this rich field of labor. Hundreds and thousands of the most intelligent and accomplished men and women of our land, are laboring arduously and zealously every Sabbath in the Sunday school, whose invaluable services could not be purchased with silver or gold; nothing but benevolence and Christian love hold out inducements strong enough to secure their labors." Nor is there any thing in this business, which would render it a disgrace for the most affluent, aged, or pious members of our churches to display solicitude in its prosperity. The time may not be far distant when it will be rare to find an individual of high moral attainments and of exemplary Christian virtues, who has not been a Sunday school teacher or scholar.

An English clergyman of considerable celebrity says, that "with the whole educational apparatus of Europe full in his view," he hesitates not to assert "that the British Sunday schools, sustained at a millionth part of its expense, possesses a value which infinitely exceeds it;" and he adds, "that all the nations of continental Europe cannot furnish a body of persons, equal in point of numbers, knowledge, piety, character, and usefulness, to that of the Sunday school teachers of England. Despise not, therefore, a work, nor consider it a task or drudgery, which the infinite Son of God and many of the wisest of men have been delighted and dignified in performing; though like them you should often labor among the ignorant and degraded, amid degrees of insensibility

and vile ingratitude, sufficient to make infinite mercy herself weary in well-doing.

"The career of benevolence is not a path of flowers leading down a gentle declivity, where the philanthropist treads softly and swiftly without a difficulty to check his progress, or a discouragement to chill his ardor. Mercy accompanied only by that wisdom which is peaceable, must attempt to do by gentleness what she cannot effect by force; toil through difficulties which she cannot remove; under the most aggravated injuries console herself with the thought that she did not deserve them; amidst present discouragement, cheer herself with the hope of future success, — and after waiting long and patiently for the fruit of her labors, sometimes find her only present reward in the purity of her intentions, and the consciousness of having done all she could."

But remember that "the deeds of virtue are immortal." With careful assiduity you are to plant the tender scions in the vineyard of the Lord, and like the faithful husbandman, to prune, protect, and cherish with fond solicitude the rising plant, waiting with long patience for the early and latter rain; and in due time its matured fruit, like clusters on the vine, will tempt every passer-by to partake. Said Mr. Webster, "We know, when we work upon materials immortal and imperishable, that they will bear the impress which we place upon them through endless ages to come. If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble to the dust. But if we work on men's immortal minds, if we imbue them with high principles, with the just fear of

God and of their fellow men, we engrave on those tablets something which no time can efface, but which will brighten and brighten to all eternity."

There were certain artists who knew how to paint invisible pictures, so that when placed in the sunlight or before the fire, as if by a magic wand, tint after tint appeared, till the whole landscape stood out in all its variegated coloring of beauty and brightness. So the toils of the Sabbath school teacher, intently and prayerfully drawing the lines of religious instruction over the broad canvas of social character, may appear unmeaning; but let that character be exposed to the intense action of adversity, the quickening agency of the means of grace, and the fervid influences of the Holy Spirit, — and the emblems of Christian doctrine and the figures of salvation will be developed in a thousand individual families and social scenes.

"In many cases the seed of the kingdom begins to germinate long before the eye discerns the hidden process. A secret work is going on, which shall one day surprise and delight you. The first dawn of day commences amidst the thickest shades of night; the tide begins to turn, long before it is observed by the person walking on the sea-shore. Thus the instructions which you are now giving may one day yield a bountiful harvest, where all now appears a barren waste. The instruction received in a Sunday school can never be totally effaced. There is a light and power given to conscience, a susceptibility to devout impressions, which render the continual incidents of a providential nature more liable to receive needful attention. Even should your pupil plunge into

scenes of vice, and become an abandoned profligate, when no friend is near, amidst the long neglected stores of Sunday school instruction, memory may bring afresh the means of return, and point the way to his conviction and pardon. Children, in whose hearts devout impressions may have been produced, are often removed from beneath your care, before you have an opportunity to witness the fruits of your toil; but the eye of God is upon his work, and he will one day make known to you the result of your labors.

"But you perhaps look at the general appearance of the poor, you see them sunk in degradation, slaves to appetite, and as regardless of all moral culture as the brute creation. But remember that the work of reform is a slow one, and that thousands may be made better while the *visible* state of society remains unchanged. We must look forward to other generations to see the full effects of the moral elevation which we commence now. Wickedness is noisy and obtrusive, and may be seen and heard in every place of concourse; piety is silent, modest, and retiring; not lifting up her voice, nor praying in the corners of streets. To see the overflow of sin, we need not give ourselves much research; but to witness the good effects of Sunday schools, we must follow the subjects of them to their closets of devotion, and to the retired scenes of domestic life and social order, where, like the violet, they are to be traced rather by their fragrance than their colors, and are valued in private more than they are known in public." And often its invigorating virtue extends by a thousand minute and invisible processes, and may be felt long after

the time when, and far from the place where, it was first absorbed.

Western travellers tell us of a river whose course is hidden; it comes forth suddenly after being lost for many miles. Moral influences are oftentimes untraceable by human eyes. Like subterranean watercourses bubbling up here and there, they spread verdure and fertility far and wide, and then, peradventure, are lost again, but are never, never exhausted. Sometimes a single day converts whole years of fruitless toil into a blessing.

John Flavel is said to have preached a sermon on the text, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema maranatha." When he was about to pronounce the apostolic benediction, he paused and asked how he could do it over an assembly where were probably many persons under the dreadful curse denounced in his text. The effect was felt by many a heart; a lad was present fifteen years of age, who lived to be one hundred and sixteen, and who was converted at the age of one hundred by means of a vivid recollection of Flavel's sermon, and the incident above named. The influences of an early religious Sabbath school education! Where may they not be developed? Perhaps in some most distant land, awakening to consciousness the long slumbering, the indifferent, the benighted; and, as their souls were lit up with the gospel truth, they would cry aloud, "I will arise and go to my father."

The dawning of the early day, with the shades of night gradually breaking and giving way before the full-orbed effulgence of the risen sun, and then in due succession the gradual incoming of the night,

with its deeper and deeper growing shades of darkness, to be dispelled by the morn of the following day, is the typical representation of the seasons of youth and age. Sunday school instruction, to the mind of the child, is the breaking away of the deep shades of ignorance and the coming in of the light of the full day; and when, in the course of years, gloom and the shadow of death was upon the man of years, the precepts of his youth would come back to him, enlightening his path and throwing a radiant glow over his existence. Some seed was found in the shrouds of an Egyptian mummy which had been entombed for a thousand years, and being planted it grew. Thus it is with the seed sown by the pious Sabbath school teacher, it may grow after it has been planted for a thousand years.

Despair not, therefore, in a work which has the yea and amen of Omnipotence. But proceed to lay broad and deep these foundations, trusting in the unseen arm of the unseen God to vindicate truth and right, and bring light out of darkness, order out of confusion, formation from chaos; though the bread cast upon the dark waters sinks and penetrates into the gloomy depths, yet the eye of nature watches over it, the hand of nature preserves it, her voice calls it forth, the dews and sunlight develop its growth and perfect the fruit; thus it is found "after many days."

So, morally, with the seed sown in the spring-time of life, in the prolific but often unpropitious soil of the youthful heart.

> "Though seed lie buried long in dust,
> It sha'nt deceive your hope;
> The precious grain shall ne'er be lost,
> For grace insures the crop."

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." Then

> "Sow in the morn the seed,
> At eve hold not thy hand;
> To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
> Broadcast it round the land."

The workman that needeth not to be ashamed, puts in his sickle at whatever corner of the field the master of the vineyard has placed him. His eyes look right on, his eyelids look straight before him, and all his ways are established. You see his progress only by the sheaves that rise behind him, and while another is determining where to begin, he has done and perhaps received his wages; while a great but lifeless man is delaying and deliberating upon the best method to demolish the temple of Dagon, a little living man has dug away and undermined the foundations, that it has fallen of itself. Look at the privations, toils, and sufferings of the gold diggers; for the sake of pelf they can brave the seas, scale the mountains, traverse the deserts, round the cape of eternal storms, forsake home, friends, and kindred, hazard happiness, health, fortune, life, and heaven; making Satan's only truth a lie, which declares "all that a man hath will he give for his life."

But these recent developments show that all a man hath, even his life, will he give for gold! And shall we be less zealous and sacrificial for souls, for salvation and heaven? Our Saviour, in that masterpiece of truth and eloquence, his sermon on the mount, taught us where our treasure is there will our heart

be also; that our hands and heart are one and inseparable; which truth finds illustration in all the history of human life.

Cæsar was so absorbed in one of his victories, that his description in a letter to the Roman court consisted of but three words, "Veni, Vidi, Vici," — I came, I saw, I conquered.

When Santa Anna wrote to Gen. Taylor, in a letter of fearful threatenings, to surrender at a specified time, he wrote back this comprehensive reply, — "*Gen. Taylor never surrenders.*"

Napoleon once wrote to Josephine a letter in these words, "To-morrow I shall attack the enemy, defeat them, and terminate the business." And Admiral Hawk wrote to King George the Second this letter, "Sir, I have taken, burnt, and destroyed all the French fleet as per margin. — Hawk."

These illustrations show how completely men's hearts are absorbed in the great deeds of their hands. Patrick Henry could say, "As for me, give me *liberty* or give me death." And John Adams, "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote." We are told of an eminent judge whose mind was so accustomed to the forms of judicial proceedings, that as he was about to close his eyes upon all earthly scenes, he exclaimed, "Gentlemen of the jury, you may retire to your room;" and we are told, also, of an eminent prelate, who, at the like extremity of his career, said with the energy of a living, rather than in the feebleness of a dying man, "If there were but twenty, they should have a second service;" intimating the habitual desire of his soul that the means of

grace should be extended without stint to all the needy and perishing.

Many solicitous parents expend their last dying breath in counsels to their children. "The ruling passion is strong [even] in death." And why may not love for the souls of dear little children, become the predominant motive power of life, consecrating all to their service, that they will count not their money, comfort, convenience, or lives dear to them for the sake of the work; that the happiest and most vivid associations of the last hours of life shall be with the scenes and services of the Sabbath school room; that their fondest anticipations shall be the meeting of the departed little ones, who shall hail them triumphant upon the shores of deliverance, and welcome them to their bright and blissful bowers, acknowledging them before the great Judge and an assembled universe.

Especially when you reflect upon the dignity and magnitude of your work, — that the profoundest principles are wrapped up in the simple precepts which you teach, — that public opinion is formed by influences in childhood, — that you are laying the "foundations of many generations."

That the awakening of the dormant energies of the moral and immortal nature of a single child is an event of immeasurable interest to itself and to the country, and, for aught we know, to orders of intelligence far exalted above us; for the salvation of thousands of perishing souls may result from the good instructions which you give to this little child. In your arduous work you are fixing the pillars on which is to rest a superstructure that will be owned as

God's building, and stand for the admiration of the world. Yea, you are laying the foundations of heaven: "*for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" You are working at tender roots and radicles which will lift their giant branches to the heavens; you are pruning buds which will open their petals in the face of God, and shed their fragrance in paradise. Let, therefore, the language apply to you which was addressed to others on another occasion:—

> "Fight on, brave knights,
> Man dies but glory lives,
> Fight on, brave knights,
> Brilliant eyes are upon you."

And remember that expedition is necessary. The tide of time in its noiseless flow is bearing rapidly beyond our reach, those millions of children and youth whose neglected childhood has ripened into a maturity of vice, which will one day, and that not distant, decide the moral conflicts of the future. The boy of to-day, to-morrow puts on the pomp and pride of conscious manhood; and, whilst you tarry, generations are coming upon the stage and taking the destinies of the world into their hands. In a few, very few years at most, these scholars will all be gone beyond your instruction. Every Sabbath almost, some are leaving the school and retiring, it is to be feared in many cases, beyond the sound of pious admonition for ever. Beyond the age of fifteen or sixteen few remain to enjoy the privileges of the school; and but few, comparatively, remain so long. With the school, many of them take leave of the sanctuary; and, when they cease to hear the voice of

the teacher, listen no more to the joyful sound from the lips of the preacher. You must give them up to the violence of their own corruptions, — to the strength of their own passions, — to the pollution of bad company, without a friend to watch over them, or a single guide to direct them. The generations of a Sunday school are said to succeed each other in an average of less than three years; and yet this brief time is the principal rock from which many of them are to hew out their eternal fortunes. A celebrated king, on an occasion of a feast, while his heart was merry with wine, was interrupted by a courier, who came in haste with a message. But the king, refusing the messenger, said, "I am occupied." "*Serious things! Serious things!*" cried the courier. "Serious things *to-morrow*," replied the king, "but not to-night." And when the morrow came, it *was* serious; for he was slain, and his kingdom divided to others.

"*Moments seize,*
Heaven's on the wing; a *moment* we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy."

I would that in these days of mammoth conventions, we could have a world's convention of Sabbath school teachers, which would be like a moral congress to negotiate for the Prince of Peace; sublime as a synod of angels assembled in yonder sun, delegated by heaven to devise measures for the well-being of the universe; who should strike for truth, for God, for the church and the world. Methinks there would almost be silence on earth and in heaven during their deliberations; and may your hands be

found strong enough to grapple with the difficulties, numerous enough to master the extent, self-denying enough to bear the burdens, and hopeful enough to wait for the rewards which you would there contemplate.

May you devote your best energies, your mature strength, and your hoary hairs to this work. And in that day when the Prince of Light makes up his jewels, may you be found as polished shafts in God's building, as stars in the Redeemer's crown; and may heaven lend her wings and bear you up to trace out your names written upon many of its blissful inhabitants.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MUTUAL RELATIONS OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

PARENTS, you are the natural, moral, and legal guardians of your children. You are their oldest, most constant, confidential, intelligent, and effectual, and therefore their most responsible teachers living. You are their *oldest* teachers; ever since their intellects dawned and they were susceptible of the least impression, they have been imbibing your instructions; your faces are the first which they ever knew, your voices the first they ever heard. You are their most *constant* teachers; by night and by day, in sickness and in health, as they have gone out and as they have come in, your eye has rested upon them with a vigilance only less sleepless than the eye of God; to you they have incessantly looked for counsel and example.

You are the most *confidential* teachers of your children. The child spreads out the tender leaves of its mind to parental instruction, as the green plant to the dews and sunlight of heaven; as the needle turns to the pole, as the flower follows the sun through all his circuit, and opens its gay bosom full upon his glowing, rolling orb, all day long, from morn to noon, from noon to night, and drinks in his warm rays; so the mind of infancy and childhood

pursues inquiringly and unquestionably the parent's eye, and sees in it the world. Standing by the father's side, or sheltered in his arms, it knows no danger. His name is a strong tower of defence and broad wing of protection; his strong arm uplifted is omnipotence, and his instructions, though not obeyed, are the height of wisdom.

You are the most *intelligent* teachers of your children; you know them best, are best acquainted with their peculiar natures, dispositions, and circumstances. You are their most *effectual* teachers. Early parental influence is not the filmy line of the spider, broken by every breeze, but binding links of steel, connecting the destinies of an immortal being with the joys of heaven or the tears of hell. The mother preoccupies the unwritten page of being; gives lessons before any other instructor, and mingles with the cradle dream that which shall be read in eternity. There are no instructions so lasting, no influence so powerful, no impressions so permanent, as those which are earliest excited by the parent in the mind of the child; they will abide fresh and uneffaced amid the crumbling ruins of mind and body.

> "The mother in her office, holds the key
> Of the soul; and she it is who stamps the coin
> Of character, and makes the being who would be a savage
> But for her cares, a Christian man!
> Then crown her queen of the world."

God has elected her to a calling more curious and wonderful than the magic art of the sculptor; for hers is not to present a lifeless form of beauty to an admiring world, but one instinct with "thoughts

that breathe, and words that burn," — a workmanship which will reveal for ever the touch of its early fashioning. "Mother! the tear of your child will be wiped away, — its sorrows are fleeting: —

> 'The tear down childhood's cheek which flows,
> Is like the dewdrop on the rose;
> When the next summer's breeze comes by
> And waves the bush, the flower is dry.'

But your influence over your child is deathless; your impressions upon its heart are like letters cut in brass or granite; the impress of your life upon its soul is immortal."

You are the most *responsible* teachers of your children. Earth holds men responsible for the conduct of their children, and heaven holds them responsible for their salvation. In Iceland they are said to have a law which ascribes the honor or ignominy, and awards the retribution of the children to their parents. And at the final judgment it will be apparent that each man's stewardship embraced himself and the children which were given him. God has placed the child in the family; not in the street, nor in the market, nor in the school; but in the family.

The parent is the first teacher of the child, home the first school, and its science the first lessons taught which are preparatory to all that follow. It is here that the key-note of character and destiny is struck. The mother is to —

> "Answer all its questions, and ask others
> As simple as its own, yet wisely framed
> To wake and prove the infant's faculties;
> As though its mind were some sweet instrument,
> And she, with breath and touch, were finding out
> What stops or keys would yield the richest music."

You are the temporal creators, the rightful proprietors, the sole sovereigns, the great and unceasing benefactors of your children; yóu are their moral sponsórs to the living God, next to Christ, their saviours; and inquisition will be made at your hands for their blood if they perish.

You are the nearest relatives and dearest friends of your children; and they are your brightest earthly hopes, and richest earthly treasures.

You are their *nearest relatives;* they are the fruit of your bodies, — the offspring of your loins, the counterparts, the reduplicates of yourselves, for parents repeat their lives in their children. Your children are another edition of yourselves; your blood is to flow on in full tide through their veins, your hearts to beat in their bosoms, — your voices are to echo from their lips, — your names, forms, features, and influences, they are to carry onward when you are motionless and forgotten in the grave.

Your treasures are to be theirs, the keys of your coffers will drop into their hands from your nerveless grasp; your farms, shops, storehouses, ships, and offices, will be occupied and controlled by them.

The insect deposits its egg and lies down to sleep in death, soon to awaken and speak again through the bursting shell; the decaying oak drops the acorn, which springs up at its base and flourishes, a second edition of the forest king; the expiring sovereign resigns his sceptre to his royal son, the rightful heir of his realm; and when the trumpet of the gospel is removed from faltering veteran lips, it is often placed to the young fresh lips which he has attuned for the service. Thus life in its appurtenances is

hereditary, rising, self-perpetuating, like the Phœnix from its ashes.

The principles of the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles survive them; — the meekness of Moses, the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job, the affection of John, and the zeal of Paul, still animate and bless the world; and will continue with increasing power, fragrance, and splendor, to the judgment-day, and forever. The Pilgrim's character and principles survive, and "upon the wings of immortality will be borne to the latest generations of mankind," — though their sainted forms have long since dissolved to dust beneath their crumbling tombstones. The Mayflower has left the waves, and the red man's wail has died away beyond the distant mountains, — their council fires have gone out on the shore, their arrows are broken, their springs are dried up, and their cabins are in the dust. Yet,

> "The *Pilgrim's spirit* has not fled,
> It walks in noon's broad light;
> And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,
> With the holy stars, by night.
>
> It watches the bed of the brave who have bled
> And shall guard the icebound shore,
> Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,
> Shall foam and freeze no more."

The Scriptures also recognize the character of children as derived in an important sense from their parents. It is thus that "sin has passed upon all men." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all." Christian faith is also spoken of in a similar way, — "I call to remembrance (writes Paul to Timothy) the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt

first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." Not that in the literal sense, it had descended thus through three generations. But the apostle conceives a power in the good life of these mothers, that must needs transmit some flavor of piety. In like manner God is represented as keeping covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; which amounts to a declaration that he will spiritually own every succeeding generation, to the end of the world, if only the preceding will live so as to be fit vehicles of his blessings. There is no power in the parent to renew the child, nor can it be renewed by any agency of the Spirit less immediate than that which renews the parent himself. When the germ is formed on the stem of any plant, the formative instinct of the plant may be said, in one view, to produce it; but the same solar heat which quickens the plant, must quicken also the germ, and sustain the internal action of growth, by a common presence in both. So the organic power of character is not a complete power in itself, but only such a power as demands the realizing presence of the Spirit of God, both in the parent and the child, to give it effect. As Paul said, "I have begotten you through the gospel," so may we say of the parent, who, having a living gospel enveloped in his life, brings it into organic connection with the soul of childhood. "The sons of God are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "The growth of Christian virtue is no vegetable process, no mere onward development. It involves a struggle

with evil, a fall and a rescue. The soul becomes established in holy virtue, as a free exercise, only as it passes round the corner of fall and redemption, ascending thus unto God through a double experience, in which it learns the bitterness of evil and the worth of good, fighting its way out of one, and achieving the other as a victory."

But to return; the Scriptures have a perpetual habit of associating children with the character and destiny of their parents. How many of his precious promises run "to you and to your *children*." "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be *a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*." And the judgments which he showers down upon the ungodly, fall alike upon their children. "God layeth up the iniquity of the wicked for his children, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation."

Thus the mantle of the parent is to fall on the child, whether of weal or woe. Your children are

not only to perpetuate your names, estates, characters, and influence, but your blessings and judgments too, when you retire from the arena of life. They are to take up your lives where you lay them down, and what shall be the boon to them and to you? *How* shall they perpetuate you? Shall it be for your honor or ignominy, for their praise or shame, and for the world's bliss or misery? Be assured that what they do for *you*, then, and for mankind, will depend upon what you do for them now; and what you do for them *now*, you do for them *then* emphatically; for you live more for the future than for the present, more for your children than for yourselves; and the more offspring you have, the greater the responsibility, for their influence will be yours, magnified and multiplied, and may ext nd to the verge of the earth and the end of time. "It is not all of life to live;" man's works follow him, and these are his most mighty, tangible, and lasting works. If, therefore, we would not have our plans and purposes perish with us, as our bodies sink into the dust, we must prepare proper workmen to carry them on for us; for it is in this way that we can best perpetuate ourselves, and this thought is the more important because the general tendency of our fallen nature is downward.

And as the nearest *relationship* exists between parents and children, so also does the *dearest friendship*; and this friendship is mutual and abiding. Mother! It is the first name the child ever speaks, the dearest name it ever knows, and the last it will ever forget. It is closely connected in the mind with home, happiness, and heaven.

"There 's a charm of sacred power
Dwells in the name of mother."

Round the idea the mind of a man clings with fond affection. It is the first deep thought stamped upon our infant hearts, when soft and capable of receiving the most profound impressions, and all the after feelings of the world are more or less light in that comparison. Even in our old age we look back to that feeling as the sweetest we have had through life. And though our passions and wilfulness may have led us far from the object of our filial love; though we have even pained her heart by opposing her wishes and violating her commands, and become headstrong and angry at her counsels; yet when death has stilled her monitory voice, and nothing but calm memory remains to recapitulate her virtues and good deeds, affection — like a flower beaten to the ground by a past storm — raises up her head and smiles among her tears. Round that idea, as we have said, the mind clings with fond affection; and even when the earlier period of our loss forces memory to be silent, fancy takes the place of our dead parent, with a garland of graces, beauties, and virtues we doubt not that she possessed.

"I had rather possess my mother's picture," said Cowper, "than the richest jewel in the British crown; for I loved her with an affection that her death, fifty years since, has not in the least abated."

And father, too, has magic in the sound to charm the filial heart; he is a kind of tutelar divinity to his child. "Who hath loved him so fondly as he?" And there is none greater to him, except the Su-

preme. And this friendship is mutual. Not only do children find their best friends in their parents, but the hearts of the parents are bound up in the hearts of their children, and their happiness is part and parcel of their own. The language of many a parent in reference to their children is, "These, *these* bind me to earth, for these alone I pray to live;" and the choice of many would be to die and be buried with their offspring. "Where thou goest I will go, where thou diest I will die, and there also will I be buried." "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" The monarch minstrel could have seized his harp and sung his own death song with cheerfulness. The heart of the parent needs no acquaintance with poesy to say of his boy: —

> "He 's all my exercise, my mirth, my matter,
> And, with his varying childness, cures
> Thoughts that would thick my blood."

How many living and palpitating nerves come down from parents, and centre in the young hearts of their children! what riches, honors, enterprises, or pleasures compare with them! What costly works of art, what splendid galleries of sculpture or of painting, won by a nation's arms, or purchased by a nation's wealth, are comparable in value to the treasures they have in their children?

A little child fills a great place in the parental heart, in the family circle, and often in the neighborhood and society. Many is the mother like her who perished on the Green Mountains in a storm of snow; when dying, —

"She stripped her mantle from her breast,
And bared her bosom to the storm;
Around the child she wrapped her vest,
And smiled to think her babe was warm."

Their prayer, in reference to all that can harm them, is, —

"Spare, oh, *spare* their tender age;
On me, on *me*, exhaust your rage."

In case of fire, the children are thought of by the parents before their own lives, money, goods, or the stranger that lodges within their gates. The last morsel of food is taken from the parent's mouth, and given to the children; in their service pain is pleasure; for their comfort, loss is gain. Your time, strength, and money fly unheeded and uncounted. There is nothing in the realm of possibility which a parent will not do for his child. In short, there is no being in the world, save God alone, who lies so near the parent's heart as the child, and often it usurps the place of God himself. "No eloquence on earth is so subduing as the moaning of the infant when in pain. No reward is sweeter than that infant's smile:" —

"A mother's love! oh, who may breathe,
Oh, who can feel its worth,
Its patient suffering until death,
E'en from our childhood's birth!"

None else can guess it; a mother's affection cannot be conceived but by a mother.

Again, children are parents' *brightest earthly hopes.* In them is often concentrated their every hope beneath

the sun; their hope of life, of friendship, of bread, of happiness, of retrievement of the follies of their own lives, if not of heaven itself. The mother, it is true, will give up her child; but, like the mother who stood before King Solomon, it will be only to prevent it from being divided.

It is related, that a father with his numerous family of children, was once surprised by the sudden appearance and hasty approach of a company of murderous Indians, and his situation was such that he could only escape with *one* child, whilst he must leave all the rest for the slaughter. But (this was a time that tried his soul) which should he take? As his eye flashed among them, this one he recognized as designed for one calling, that for another, and the other for a third; one was a frail child, and the other robust; one was the oldest, and another the youngest; one a son, another a daughter; one resembled the father, and the other the mother, — which should he take? He chose to remain, and perish with them all, rather than attempt a choice: —

> "Hast thou measured the heights of heaven above?
> Then canst thou tell a father's love."

In children, also, parents have their *greatest earthly treasures;* — the wealth of the Indias, the gold of Ophir, California, and Australia, could not purchase one of them; the millions of Crœsus would be scorned as an offer for one of the least of your little ones; your time, attention, wealth, strength, and life are nothing, in competition with their prosperity and happiness; these are all offered up in sacrifice to their interests. With many parents there are no real

treasures but their offspring, and poor, gloomy, and void, would this world be without them.

And as you value and esteem your children, so you should labor to bring them up in a manner which will secure to them and you the greatest amount of happiness, prepare them for the widest usefulness upon earth, and the highest bliss in heaven. The statute of the Lord requires that children be trained up in the way they should go, and the promise to such parents is, that when they are old they will not depart from it; which implies that there *is* a way in which a man should walk when he is old; when with grey hairs and bending form, he descends the vale of years, and sinks in ruins to the tomb. But this is not the way which he would ordinarily choose; it is not his natural course, he must therefore be *trained* to it, and trained *early;* he must be initiated at the *opening* of his pathway, for it is much easier to walk the whole length of the way than a *part.* The *child* must be trained in the way he *should* go when he is *old*, which covers the whole ground of his duty; the promise to such parents and children is, their instruction shall abide forever, which embraces the whole compass of promise; and what greater assurance can reasonably be required than the word of God?

We pray for impenitent sinners among ourselves, and for the myriads of the heathen world, hoping that our faith may remove the mountains and hasten their conversion. Now if our prayers may be, in the divine economy, the means of sending forth a regenerating energy over half the earth's circumference, may they not be equally efficacious in the re-

generation of the loved ones who nestle in our bosoms and hang upon our necks, and send tides of joy to the heart by their innocent glee, and the echoes of their toddling footsteps?

"Every reader of the Bible knows that God has manifested a gracious and special regard to the *young*, under every dispensation. Precepts, warnings, and promises are scattered over the entire page of revelation; while Joseph under the patriarchal, Samuel under the Mosaic, and Timothy under the Christian dispensation, are presented as specimens of the loveliness and advantage of early piety, for the encouragement of parents, and the imitation of youth." And be assured there are none so favorably and responsibly placed as the former, for discharging this early duty, and securing to their offspring this inestimable blessing.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAMILY.

The family is the first element and the last rampart of society. God in his providence begins the work of education in the family. He places the immortal spirit, upon its first introduction into this world, amid the salutary influences of home. For two or three years, the child can, under ordinary circumstances, enjoy the advantages of no other than the family school. Every family, then, where there are young children, should be regarded in its true light; as a school, appointed by God, to be preparatory to the schools which may follow, and adapted, in its influence upon the child, to have an important bearing upon their character and destiny. "Here, in the family, lies the formation of the social structure, and the whole edifice is adorned and strengthened, or deformed and marred, by the skill or want of it which is shown here." The streams that have their fountains in home, as they expand themselves into the great ocean of public sentiment and influence, return, as the vapors that rise in clouds and fill the heavens, to effect for good or evil the original fountains of society.

At first, parents hold their children as passive

lumps in their arms; but soon they open into conscious life under their eye and being, which is poured into their souls through their senses, and for many years they are within the matrix of parental life, which continually flows into them, just as naturally and by a law as truly organic, as when the sap of a trunk flows into a limb. As the impressions of children are anterior to all choice, so they are independent of all memory; nevertheless, when often repeated, they become formative of character. This nurture of the house gives the will its first movement, and may be called atmospheric; for it is breathed into the child's soul before he is conscious of it. Thus all the various moods of feeling, sentiment, and affection, propagate themselves in young hearts. They may be the oxygen, or the azote of death; but one thing is certain, — *they will exist.*

After the murder of Abel, and the expulsion of Cain from Eden, it is said that Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." It is no less true that every parent *impresses* his "likeness" and "image" upon his child, by the influences he exerts upon it.

"Childhood is like a mirror, catching and reflecting images from all around it. An impious, profane, or improper thought uttered by a parent's or teacher's lips, may operate upon a young heart like a careless spray of water thrown upon polished steel, staining it with rust, which no after scouring can efface."

The stamp of their nature will be upon their children; revealed in their stature, complexion, gait, form, and disposition; their exercises and ways will be translated into them, their odor will be forever in

their garments, their spirit will be perpetually breathed into their natures.

The anger and gentleness, the fretfulness and patience, — the appetites, passions, and manners, — their thoughts, opinions, all the variant forms of love, moods of feeling, exhibited around them, pass into them as impressions, and become seeds of character in them, — not because the parents will, but because it must be so, whether they will or not. They blend with their insipient half formed exercises, and thus beget their own good or evil within them, they propagate their own kind in their children, whether they will or not, by a law of moral infection, — children see the world in the parents' eye; in them, in a sense, "they live, and move, and have their being." We may therefore set it down as a fact on which we may so far build our systems of education, that the man will always show some traits of his boyhood, however much other causes may have modified them. Home will linger about him still; as the grinder of aromatic seeds carries about with him, wherever he goes, the fragrance of his workshop. As the young Indian slave wears through all his days the inburnt marks of his first master, so a child's soul may wear through life the spiritual marks of his early education. Just as the twig was bent the tree has been inclined.

With regard to boys, these influences, in five cases out of ten, have decided the choice of profession and pursuit in life; and, in eight cases out of ten, have decided the character of the individual.

> "The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
> Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees;
> And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
> That education gives her, false or true."

As a rule we have but to ask relative to an individual, what was the political and religious faith of his father, to know what is his belief. Says Dr. Woods, "From the beginning of the world, the character and condition of children have generally resulted from the conduct of parents. The peculiar character of a tribe or nation has commonly been derived from the character of its father or head. This extends to the *religious* as well as the social and secular character. The history of the Christian church shows that after it has been once established in any place, it has depended for its continuance and increase, chiefly upon the success of parents in promoting the piety of their children." Parents have, therefore, in a great measure, the fashioning, moulding, and directing of the mighty future.

"A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Man as legitimately exerts influences in accordance with the character he has formed,—morally, mentally, and physically. It is from the character of his mind, and his personal habits and manners, that a formative influence flows, as really and truly as it is "from the abundance of the heart (that) the mouth speaketh," or as that matter and mind move in the direction of their impelling force. If the heart and the mind, from which these influences proceed, are impure, corrupt, and vicious, what process of filtration exists between the parent and the child, which can possibly prevent this moral putridity from being transferred to the latter? If the parent be of an opposite character, such also will be the influence he will exert upon the child; nor can he withstand it any more than the violet can cool the scorching sun, or the tattered leaf tame the hurricane.

The child is, in a very peculiar sense, a creature of imitation. Imitativeness is far more the *ruling passion* in a child, than in a person of riper years. Indeed, it seems to be the most natural channel through which the intellect of the child may develop itself. It is especially so before he becomes of sufficient age to judge of the obligatory nature of rules, and of the moral qualities of actions.

In the mother's hand, more than in any other, is the destiny of future empires, churches, and families. She stands at the fountain, and she is to give direction to those first ideas, first emotions, and first efforts, which are to swell and grow to mighty powers, sufficient at last to bless or curse a world. It is for her to descry the ideal human being that lies concealed in every infant, and then to bring it out, and finally to invest it with positive life. It is for her to embroider the mind of her child all over with figures of her own selection. In short, it is for her to open heaven to the young eye of faith, and thus make her child an heir apparent of the wealth of all the future. Thus it is for her to make the developing process so perfect, that the curative one will never be needed.

Rev. Mr. Kirk, on the occasion of a recent Sabbath school anniversary, drew a picture of four scenes; in which he traced a child from the pious family to its entrance into the Sabbath school, where it read the publications and drank in the instructions of the devout teacher. From thence he traced his godly footsteps to the meridian of life, to the zenith of his strength, prosperity, and influence; where he acts amid the mighty, but corrupt functionaries of the

world, standing erect, God's noblest workmanship, "faithful amid the faithless." From thence he pursues him to a glorious meeting of parent, teacher, and child, at heaven's golden gate, where they strike their harps in a united, blissful, and eternal embrace before the throne.

The pertinence and force of this illustration lies in the fact, that it traces the child from the *family*, the starting point, where the key-note of his blissful destiny was struck, and this issue of immortality received its direction; for there is a legitimate and logical connection between the child in the devout arms of the mother who bore him, and victory over the world which contains him, and the celestial embrace of the Redeemer who created him. The succession of the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear is very obvious to all; but the little seed, the secret germination, and the silent birth of the tender plant lying back in the spring-time of life, or in the elements of Christian instruction, is liable to be overlooked.

Since the parent is the model or pattern after which the children are principally formed, can they see no responsibility here, to possess such characters as, imparted to their children, will cause them to grow up in intelligence, virtue, and affection, filling their homes and the community with gladness, making the fireside a circle of unfading smiles, a refreshment for exhaustion, a refuge in reverses, a bright revelation of a better world. "If a man were to be set before a mirror, with the feeling that the exact image of what he *is*, for the day, is there to be produced and left as a permanent and fixed image forever, to what carefulness, what delicate sincerity of spirit

would he be moved! And will he be less moved to the same, when that mirror is the soul of his child?"

An ancient artist sketched the figure of a beautiful boy, from the bright original; the loveliest child he ever saw — delicate as a flower, and brilliant as a star — too fair and beautiful for earth. He suspended it upon the wall of his studio, thinking that he might never look upon its like again, and resolved that when he saw a perfect contrast in the ugliest victim of vice to be imagined in humanity's form, he would paint the guilty wretch, and suspend the portrait by the side of the angel child. Years rolled by, and at length he found a loathsome subject, vile as vile could be, within a prison's walls, stretched upon a floor of stone, with the bruises and putrefying sores of vice festering upon every feature, and blotting out the last trace of human brotherhood from the heart. A man, whose soul was stained with blood, with glaring eyes and haggard face, and with demoniac rage cursing himself and his fellow beings, and blaspheming God, lay chained within that miserable abode, awaiting the appointed hour of execution The artist transferred his likeness to the canvas, and placed it opposite the child's. The contrast was most striking and complete. The angel boy, — the fiend man! What must have been the feelings of the artist, when, upon inquiry, he ascertained that both portraits were of the same individual being! The beautiful, the innocent child, had grown into the hideous, the sinful man! He could scarcely believe his eyes. He wondered and wept over the change. Does not this incident impress us with the responsibility of taking care of the child, and of

bestowing upon its varied natures, attention proportionate to their respective importance?

"Physical developments will, indeed, proceed very well with only the slightest attention on the part of the parent, or with none at all. The nursery, the playground, the field, and the workshop, invite the bodily organs into due action, and impart vigor, skill, and activity. The intellect, too, however neglected by the teacher, imbibes knowledge from a thousand sources. Each of the senses becomes an inlet for valuable ideas. Business, social converse, human example, even inanimate nature, the sky, the air, and the earth,—the elements in all their changes and activities, the vegetable kingdom,—in a word, the visible world, and all that is, or is transacted in it, becomes sources of instruction, which freely tender their lessons to the opening mind in contact with them, and force their teachings upon it, in its most passive states, and even in spite of indifference or reluctance. From all this it occurs, that every human being who grows up in a civilized community, attains a measure of intelligence sufficient for the common purposes of life,—of the intelligence that guides the race in the satisfaction of its most pressing wants, and which must on that account rank high in comparison with that class of acquisitions and accomplishments, which we are wont to dignify with the name of education. Divine Providence has thus mercifully insured to the human being such degrees of physical and mental developments, as are indispensable in the performance of those functions which pertain to self-preservation; and on which society is dependent for its being and material prosperity.

For the higher culture which gives the mind enlargement, elevation, and refinement, and opens before it a career of worthy occupations and enjoyments, years of patient labor and assiduous teachings are requisite. The fear of God is an exotic plant, that grows not without careful culture. The crown-jewel of all education, is *religious* education. In the kingdom of Prussia it is a statute law, that every child in the public schools *shall* receive moral and religious instruction. We have a noble system of common schools, under the patronage of our various State governments, which supply all that is needed in the way of mental education. But we have no State religion; it is regarded as an infringement upon the principles of religious freedom to introduce any thing more than we have of religious instructions into schools supported at the public cost.

"It is in the family, therefore, that the spiritual nature of the child must be cultivated; it is for voluntary associations to supply the great necessity and demand of moral instruction in our country. "And the superior importance of this department of education is sufficiently apparent from the consideration, that whilst both the mind and the body, left to themselves, spontaneously acquire, from their own activity, and from the business and conflicts of the world, the discipline, as well as the knowledge and skill, most valuable in the pursuits of after-life; — the moral susceptibilities, if neglected by parent and teacher, are always perverted and corrupted. The most careful and unremitted culture is requisite to preserve them from irreclaimable deterioration. They

come to no good by any spontaneous, unguided efforts or essays of their own; they will not remain in a state of embryo or torpor, till genial influences and a plastic hand woo and guide them into kindly manifestations. To let the child alone, is to insure both precocity and proficiency in evil. It affords demonstrative evidence of the constitutional depravity of man, as well as of its universality, that early childhood ever betrays a strong proclivity to wrong, that it never fails of growing up in sin, except under decided counteracting influences."

The *immortality* of the soul, also, renders its cultivation of the most transcendent importance; this property of its nature raises it infinitely above all other created things, that arithmetic, with all its powers, fails to aid our conceptions of its value. It is in consequence of *this* that it has been said with justice, that "the salvation of a soul amounts to a greater sum of happiness than the temporal deliverance of an empire for a thousand ages; for the latter will come to an end, but not the former."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN.

THE importance of *early* religious cultivation will be still further apparent, when we consider that the world is governed by children. A Roman consul once had the frankness to acknowledge, that his children ruled Rome; he said that *he* ruled Rome, but his wife ruled him, and his children ruled his wife, — therefore his children ruled Rome. And the aggregate of this sort of sovereignty, is a mighty element in the government of the world. Each parent is, to a considerable extent, in the power of his children; and is physically, intellectually, and morally, under their control. The little beings send forth the father to toil all day for them, and bring him home again early at night with a bounding heart; they cause the mother to watch over them, and toil for them by day, and fix on them her sleepless eyes by night.

One has said, "The All-wise has given to the mother the requisite attributes, — patience to wait, and gentleness to win; sagacity to see, and conscience to guide; in other words, he has given her *love* as a life-spirit and motive-spring to prompt her to watch and pray, to sing and suffer, to teach and persevere. She has from God this bridal-dower of

love, that she may lose herself in her children." And children move not only the physical but the mental nature of their parents; their minds are constantly actuated in economizing and counselling, in hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, anxieties and solicitude. And not less is the moral nature of parents affected by their children; the attributes of love, patience, goodness, justice, and mercy, are called into constant action. Many formal worshippers of *God* are led to the observance of the outward rites of religion, more for the example of their children and the youth, than for their own good; and even the devoted worshipper is moved often to the throne of grace by his offspring; here also he pours his most fervent prayers; and these attractions being removed from earth to heaven, often lead the bereaved to "set their affections on things above."

Thus it appears that parents are in an essential sense controlled by their children. The same is true of other members of the family; the elder brothers and sisters are similarly affected by the children below them; the grandparents also, who have descended to the state of second childhood, are subject to those in the first. Thus the realm of a little child often extends from the parental heart to the extremities of the family, neighborhood, or society. Are not *communities* and *legislatures* moved by the physical necessities of children, to make provisions for the supply of their wants? Do not their mental necessities move, and tax, and interest the whole community to provide schools, to erect school-houses, to write and print text-books, so that it has been correctly deemed the chief concern of a State to educate its

children? And do not the moral vices of children move legislatures to enact laws and build institutions for their correction? Probably two thirds of the human race are in a state of childhood, at least under twenty-one years of age; their influence, therefore, is that of two upon one. The departed doubtless have more or less influence with the living, and departed children exert a large share of this. It is estimated that one half of the race die in infancy, and two thirds under seven years of age. Suppose that two thirds die under twenty-one years of age, the influence of the *young* "ministering spirits" upon the living will be two to one. Thus the world is controlled to a considerable extent by children. According to the declaration, "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them."

Ungrateful and wicked children have ever been the bow which sends the sharpest and most fatal arrows that can pierce the human heart. Children have mixed the bitterest cups of wormwood and gall that were ever drunk on earth; children have caused to flow the saddest tears that were ever shed. Adam, and Jacob, and David, and Hezekiah, and Eli could tell us so. There are no sorrows like unto those which disobedient and unprincipled sons and daughters have brought upon those who bore them: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth is a thankless child." Children have awakened the deepest emotions of sympathy that were ever stirred in the human heart. "No eloquence on earth is so subduing as the moaning of the infant when in pain." Children have also mingled the *sweetest* cups, and inspired the brightest earthly hopes that were ever experienced since the

world began. "Lo! children are an heritage from the Lord, and happy is he that hath his quiver full of them." A child's tears led to the organization of the most stupendous institution upon the earth for the regeneration of the human race. "A Welsh clergyman asked a little girl for the text of the last sermon. The child gave no answer, — she only wept. He ascertained she had no Bible in which to look for the text, and this led him to inquire whether her parents or neighbors had a Bible; and this led him to begin a Bible Society for Wales. Some good people in London said, 'Why should not we have a Bible Society for England too?' And others said, 'And for France and for the nations of Europe?' And then another said, 'And why not have a Bible Society for the whole world?' The tears of that little girl led to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society." The same cause, a child's tears, led to the institution of the Sandwich Islands' mission, which has already lifted that realm from the lowest depths of heathen degradation to a position among the enlightened and Christian powers of the earth. A child's wish is recorded in the book of God, for the reading of the world, as having led to the restoration from a loathsome and fatal disease, of a great "captain of the host of the king of Assyria, mighty in valor and honorable, by whom the Lord had given deliverance to a nation." A child's tears are recorded as having led to the emancipation and exaltation of a great and mighty nation: "And behold the babe wept. And she had compassion on him," went and called a nurse, and took such steps as procured his training in all the learning of Egypt, and subsequently made

him the deliverer and lawgiver of Israel. "Thus a nation's liberty and glory seemed to hang upon the tear of that infant." And how many are the instances of reformation from intemperance, profanity, and sin, and of conversion to God, through the instrumentality of little children! "I have known a child of seven the instrument of converting one parent, and of bringing both under the means of grace. A child of fourteen has been known to bring nine other persons to worship on a special occasion."

We may consider, also, that the world is governed by the principles of children. None will doubt that the principles of adults govern the world; but many may object that when children become adults they cease to be children. This is true; but it is equally true that while they have put away childhood, they have not parted with the opinions which they imbibed in childhood. The experience of the civilized world demonstrates, that the character of a man is built on the principles instilled into his mind when a child. We may, therefore, reason thus: the world is governed by the principles of men, and men are governed by the principles of childhood; therefore the principles of childhood govern the world. All this goes to show the importance of having children properly educated.

Again, live as long as we may, the first twenty years form the greater part of our lives. They appear so while they are passing; they seem to have been so when we look back to them, and they take up more room in our memory than all the years which succeed them. It has been said, that the "period between the twelfth and seventeenth year — full of

fresh life and overflowing spirits — is the only time when man is absolutely happy." The mind often looks retrospectively, retraces the steps of its pilgrimage; it is a dark and mystic labyrinth, but at the opposite extremity a vista opens to the light. It is the day, the morn of life, in whose bright bowers, and amid whose blissful scenes, the primeval years of life were passed, and whose delightful reminiscences abide with us still, flit about us in our noonday walks, and lie down with us in our midnight slumbers. How important, then, that we draw such imagery, cherish such emotions, and enact such scenes in youth, as reënacted and repeated over and over again in the memory and imagination, will ever impart new lustre, awaken sweeter delights, and inspire holier hopes as we descend the vale of years, and sink in ruins to the tomb! How important that memory be a picture gallery, which will ever exhibit new attractions; a treasure-house from which we can draw fresh supplies, to gild and enrich the pathway of life, and thus cause the fresh morning breezes of childhood to fan us all our days; instead of involving us in debts which require our whole lifetime to pay! Our childhood, then, instead of being a passing stage or bitter regret, is the permanent and delightful experience of life, and gains interest with years. And though, ere we are aware, we flitted by these first mile-stones of our journey, yet we may always look back to them, and never without seeing fresh flowers blooming among the mosses of its time-worn surface. "The excesses of our youth," says Colton, "are drafts upon our old age, payable with interest, about thirty years after date." If this be so,

how important for them, as well as for the world, that those who have the keeping of such destinies committed to their care, be *faithful* to aid them in planting good principles, cultivating good tastes, strengthening good habits, and fleeing all those pleasures which lay up bitterness and sorrow for time to come; for "if we take good care of the first twenty years of our life, we may hope that the last twenty will take good care of us." The family is the world's primary school, from which graduate the pillars of society and the scourges of the world; the miserable victims of perdition, and the glorified inhabitants of bliss; and whether they are one or the other, depends much upon the instructions which they here receive.

To hear what is said, and see what is done, the young immortal is introduced into the family; passive, ductile, and eager. There it is to take the first step of sensuous experience, there to redden with the first blush of passion, there to melt with the first touch of pity, there to will with the first motive of hope, and there to love with the first gush of affection. How much begins here! What lines fall in endless extent and directions from this starting point in existence! Families will rise up from early mutual embrace, and separate extremely wide during their brief existence, like the Missouri and Columbia rivers, which take their rise but a mile apart — so that a traveller may drink of the springs of both in the same hour — and travel together for a distance, but find their outlets eight thousand miles apart.

As the legitimate results of right and of wrong edu-

cation, the children of Lacedæmon were said to be men, but the men of Athens were said to be children.

Look at the Samuels and Joshuas, or the Absaloms and Ahabs of the past or the present age, and they will show us, that whatever there is strikingly beautiful or strikingly deformed in the picture of manhood, is the result of the few first strokes of the pencil, and not of elaborate correction and perfect finish. How responsible, then, the position of this primary institution! how essential that the family be a little sanctuary, — a garden of Eden without the tempter, — and family religion typical of the devotion and gentle happiness of heaven! that humility with regard to themselves, benevolence with regard to others, and piety with regard to God, are ruling principles, constituting the moral atmosphere of the house; thus making heaven no strange, distant, or impossible place on earth. As it has been said, "the mother's milk should be the milk of piety."

If our lives should reflect the spirit of our institutions, and be cast in a mould of greatness analogous to the physical features of our country; if each generation, sweeping majestically on in an increased and increasing current, living upon and growing upon the granaries of the past, should heap up resources for the future; if each succeeding generation should more fully develop the true principles of life and action, hushing the evil propensities of man, and leading him gently by the hand into the paths of virtue and wisdom; if, in a general sense, "EDUCATION IS A DEBT DUE FROM PRESENT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS," especially do these obligations rest upon Christian parents toward their children.

Says an author, "As the Saxon race, when they came to these western shores, *lived down* the native inhabitants, and rolled the tide of population over them, so if the church were fulfilling the design of God in the household covenant, and training up the generations of her children in piety, she would, by this simple law of internal increase, and without a single conversion from without, overlive the world and make it her own. For it will be observed, that a large proportion of the world without are continually perishing by vice and extravagance; and when they do not perish themselves, are entailing the effects of their profligacy on the diseased and half endowed constitution of their families. This is not true in the families of the church. Habits of holy virtue, too, as we have already shown, would secure the means of living in greater abundance, and thus make the Christian families, on the average, more vigorous and healthy. And thus, by a stronger law of increase, the church would over-multiply the world, and take possession of the whole planet." If it be asked, why we do not now see a greater proportion of the children of Christians giving evidence of conversion, the answer is obvious. The piety of most religious families is shamefully defective, and so is shorn of the most of its power.

There is scarcely any religious education; the *intellect* is cultivated, but the *passions* are not controlled. The *will* is not subdued, the *affections* are not disciplined; and the religious influence is either so questionable in its nature, or feeble in its degree, that early conversions could not be expected *there*, more than in families where no profession of religion is

made. Many persons, remarkable for their piety, are yet very disagreeable persons, and that, too, by reason of some very marked defect in their religious character. They display just that spirit, and act in just that manner, which is likely to make religion odious, — the more odious, the more urgently they commend it. Sometimes they appear well to the world one remove distant from them, they shine well in their written biography, but one living in their family will know what others do not. It is far better that children be reared in professed infidel families than in such, for they imbibe a prejudice deeper and more inveterate than infidelity can possibly create.

In many instances where one of the parents is pious, the other is a worldling. Sometimes where home is a place of sanctity and security, the children are allowed to associate out of doors with wicked companions. Even where both parents have some religious principle and feeling, they often lack fervor, or faith, or affection, that their influence is impaired or neutralized; "there is not piety enough to create a *religious atmosphere.* The religious influence of the home circle is not powerful enough to counteract the irreligious influence that surrounds the youthful mind *without.* There is too little spiritual vigor to impart life. Like a poor, worn-out soil, there is scarcely energy enough to maintain the appearance of life, and far too little to produce *seed* that will scatter itself, and strike, and bring forth fruit in successive seasons." "Certain it is that there are hundreds of thousands of children in this land who have not only no sound, religious family training, but often a home education in ignorance and sin.

Some of these belong to families in which the best thing they are taught is to make a living, to take advantage of the opportunities which our land affords for advancing in material prosperity, and, if they can, to grow rich. But they are not taught to do so upon high principles of integrity and purity which the gospel alone supplies. But this is the most favorable class of cases. There are multitudes whose family influences are not simply negative and destitute of all the cultivation of the religious principle, but positive, and on the side of infidelity and vice. How many youth are taught to neglect not only, but to hate religion as a craft of priests, and as an engine of the rich to crush the poor! Sabbaths, — they have them indeed, but only to expend their opportunities in destructive amusements and dissipations. Books, — but they are the corrupting stuff which teems from the press in issues which far, far outnumbers the issues of Christian literature. Meeting places they have, — but they are synagogues of Satan, and the service in them is truly a passing through the fire to Moloch. Their moral training depraves depravity, and corrupts corruption.

Happy, happy for those families where the felt influence of parental piety is such as leads the children to say, as one said of his parents, "Well, if there are only two Christians in the world, my father is one and my mother is the other." *Such* parents will have little difficulty in *restraining* their children. A mother who had brought up a large family, all of whom had become hopefully pious, was asked what means she had used for their conversion. She replied, "I have felt that if not converted before seven

or eight years of age, they would probably be lost; and when they have approached that age, have been in agony lest they should pass it unconverted; and having gone to the Lord in my anguish, he has not turned away my prayers, nor his mercy from me." Such parents can say to their children as a dying parent recently said, "such have been my instructions to you, that you will be ashamed to meet me at the day of judgment unprepared."

We have endeavored to show in another place that there is not an uneducated child in the nation. Wesley said to a mother, if you do not educate your son the devil will. Experience teaches that the heart which is not God's throne, is Satan's seat; and the Scriptures declare, that the hand which gathereth not, scattereth abroad.

In a recent examination made at Auburn, N. Y., it was ascertained that out of nine hundred convicts only forty-seven had ever been in a Sabbath school; and that of these only seventeen had ever been regular scholars. I have seen a father and son chained together, and driven through the streets to prison, for the commission of the same crime; and there are said to be three generations in one prison, in Connecticut, grandfather, father, and son, for the commission of the same kind of crime. When we look back to our youthful days and companions, we are pained to see the ravages of death, disease, and misfortune. We find, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, we have outstripped in our career most who started with us; their wrecks and ruins are strown upon either side of our pathway; and were we to trace the history of each individual, we shall generally find that success

has resulted from a *true beginning;* that old angels have come from young saints.

Not every ship that has sailed out of Tarshish has returned freighted with gold. Many worldly hopes have gone forth swiftly and brightly like rockets, and fallen as suddenly in the form of broken and blackened sticks; not every reaper has reaped a golden harvest of years and of usefulness. "Of all the dark clouds that are gathering over the church," says one, "*this* is the darkest and most threatening, the *general neglect of religious training*, by professedly Christian parents." "If," says another, "the fires upon our altars shall ever go out, if ever another Jeremiah shall sing funeral notes over our nation's grave, it will be because the mothers of our land have forgotten their duty and their power, and have ceased to baptize their offspring with prayer. And if ever the time comes, in the history of our church, when the lambs of the flock shall be left neglected and uncared for, not many years will elapse when some future mariner, coasting the voyage of life, shall see looming up in the distance the wreck of our now prosperous church, and write upon his log-book, '*Seen to-day the wreck of some noble vessel, name and history unknown.*' 'France needs a *Washington*,' said Lamartine. 'France needs *a people*,' one of our orators replied. 'France needs *mothers*,' was the yet more profound remark of Madam Campan to Napoleon. Some years ago, a sagacious statesman from one of the South American republics, who had long mourned over the failure at self-government in his own country, came to the United States for the purpose of examining our institutions, and learning the

secret of our prosperity. After mingling in refined New England society, and witnessing its social scenes, he exclaimed, 'I have found it! I have ascertained the secret of your success in self-government, and of your character, prosperity, and greatness as a republic. You owe it to your women. I never saw the like before. Such mothers must, and no others can, make a nation like yours. Give us in South America such women for mothers, and we should, erelong, follow hard after you in the race of national prosperity and happiness.'"

Permit me to ask parents, especially Christian parents, are you training your offspring for God and for mankind? Is there not a sufficient motive to do this for their own sake, to preoccupy their minds with what is good, and true, and useful, that they may be prepared for the discharge of their responsible duties, and for the world's trials when they come? And how important for their blissful destinies, that their motives and hopes contain a proper polarity and range in the line of truth and virtue. If mind, like matter, moves in the direction of the impelling force, how important is the *first* impulse! If the first impulse be given to it at the *wrong* point, unless its momentum be resisted and overcome by some opposing power, it will move onward in the path of error, it will drive along its downward way with a velocity accelerated by all the elements of its own corruption, and by the gravity of accumulating vice, till it finally passes and is lost in dreary space, beyond the reach of centripetal forces. They will carry down with them to the realm of woe, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost, which was called upon them in their baptism.

Do it for the sake of the "world that lieth in wickedness." Let the woes and sins of a world urge you. "Can you endure the thought that another whole generation of heathen shall march in slow procession across the stage of life, and plunge unwarned and unenlightened into the abyss? Yet so it must be if the young be not trained to save them. The destiny of the world hangs on the children of the church." And what will be the influence of a single family of children in society? Not only do many living palpitating nerves come down from parents and friends, and centre in the hearts of these children, but, "as they shall advance in life, other living and palpitating nerves, which no man can number, shall go out from *their* bosoms, to twine round other hearts, and to feel their throbs of pleasure or of pain, of rapture or of agony! How many fortunes of others shall be linked with their fortunes, and shall share an equal fate; for aught you know the salvation of ten thousand immortal souls may result from the correct education of a single child. It has been estimated that one revival of religion which took place in Yale College under the presidency of Dr. Dwight, raised up ministers who were instrumental of the conversion of fifty thousand souls in one generation. Do it for your own sake. The question which was asked of the infant John, "What manner of child shall this be?" is a question which every parent is to answer of his own offspring, and one which in many most important bearings is ordinarily settled at a very early period of

their lives. If they leave their intellect unguided by morality, or unsanctified by religion, they may be preparing materials that may be turned to their own destruction; they are giving new strength to a powerful weapon that may be wielded for good or evil; and if a pure heart does not guide it, they must expect it will be wielded for evil.

Beware, then, lest you furnish recruits for dungeons and gibbets, lay up a store of misery for old age, when your eyes become dim, and your natural force abated, and "bring down your grey hairs in sorrow to the grave." And should these children whom you have offered up in baptism, in the name of the triune God, through your neglect miss their way to a happy immortality, you will still meet them at the judgment and receive their reproaches. Happy those parents who can then say, "Here, Lord, am I, and the children thou hast given me." Do it for the sake of God who made them, and has the first claim upon them; Christ who redeemed them, and desires their salvation, and the church which needs them, and prays for them. And as you value and esteem your offspring, and are obligated to train them for happiness, so you should value and esteem those institutions and instrumentalities which are adapted to promote in the highest degree their welfare, which *secure* them to you and to the world.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PARENT AND THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

THE Sabbath school, therefore, commends itself to you as the institution which came down from God out of heaven on this sublime mission, to inscribe redemption upon the hearts of the rising generations, to respond to all your instructions, and bring salvation to the door and hearth-stone of every household, that the mouths of the babes and sucklings may lisp forth his perfected praise. And to the utility of this institution there has come a response from the four winds of heaven; from all departments of society, of professions, of business, of moral enterprise and Christian benevolence, like the firing of a cannon in some parts of the Alps, which echoes and reëchoes, from wide and still wider circles, and swells into more deepening thunder, until every cavern and every crag has found a tongue, and chimes in the mountain anthem. This is the "institution which lies beyond the partialities and interruptions of the household, and yet scarcely standing out of the shadow of its eaves, amid the generous and inciting passions of youthful emulation, where our children may command a proficiency and reach a mastery that will be an armor of light, proof against

the weapons of infidelity, — a wing of immortality soaring above the enticements of the world."

And this is the institution to which God has committed, in a very large degree, the education and salvation of the rising generations. Every parent should therefore feel under obligation as high as heaven, and vast as eternity, to rally to this standard, to offer up his children a sacrifice upon this altar, whilst he *redoubles his own home efforts;* recollecting that this institution is not a *substitute* for parental instruction, but an *auxiliary;* not an offensive intruder and usurper, but a friendly ally, developing the seed sown by parental hands, and preparing the soil for that seed. It is purely *supplementary*, designed to correct the imperfections and supply the deficiencies of family instruction. Nothing must be permitted to come in between Christian parents and their offspring, to weaken in the smallest degree the sense of obligation on either.

The family is God's positive institution, and it ought to be the aim of all religious instrumentalities to make it what it was meant to be, the safe and fertile nursery of the church and State. Under God, the parent ought to be prophet, priest, and king, to the young subjects of the household. We yield to none in our views of the supreme importance of family religious training, and would reject, as radically wrong, any system which necessarily fostered the notion, that Christian parents may delegate to proxies, however intelligent and capable, the whole or even the main responsibility of their children's instruction in Christian truth and duty. Nor does this system destroy or relax the sense of parental

obligation; by affording a substitute for domestic training, it recognizes, as indispensable, parental co-operation. It affords neither release nor respite to the father or mother. The business of education is of a tri-party nature,— teachers, parents, and pupils are the joint-partners in the work; and, while something may be done by each party individually, nothing short of the harmonious and cheerful co-operation of all, can secure the richest and fullest blessings which the object under consideration is calculated to impart. The teacher is to inculcate, among his foremost lessons, parental rights and filial obligations; and the parent is to prepare the soil for the seed, being with the children, not at stated intervals, or once a week merely, but continually, by day and by night, in sickness and in health. They are to water with their tears the seed which the teacher sows with her prayers, and to watch its development by constant oversight, and frequent, special examinations; thus there is to be a mutual labor and reaction with the parent and teacher, which shall weave the golden thread of truth into the texture of the youthful heart. We repeat, no palliating pretence can justify you for delegating to strange and irresponsible hands a work of such vast moment.

Do not intrust to others what God requires you to do. Burnish these precious jewels with your own hands. Transfer the responsibility of training them up for God to no mortal, as "love intrusts no secrets." None have a parent's heart to feel, none a parent's account to render, and none can do the work so well. Think not that your whole duty is done, when you have washed the faces, combed the hair,

dressed the persons of your children, provided them with books, and sent them to the school; that you can hope and believe it is well with them, since they are enjoying Sabbath school instruction; with what kind of fidelity and appropriateness you are unable to tell.

You should see to it, that your children previously prepare their lessons, that they are regular, punctual, and attentive at the school; that they are provided with suitable teachers, who instruct them not only in the letter, but the spirit and meaning of the Scriptures. And you should endeavor, as far as possible, to attend the school yourselves, either as scholars, teachers, or spectators, giving them your most cheerful and hearty coöperation.

Pray for the school. At the family altar, in secret places, on all proper occasions, supplicate the Most High to bestow his benediction upon it. Let your presence and prayers ever be witnessed at the concerts; and let not your hands shrink from the most liberal contributions; for every dollar you give here, will return to the treasury of the Lord, and in many instances increased a hundred-fold.

As standing where the river empties into the ocean, and casting in floating substances, they are borne by the current far away into the deep; but the returning wave, overflowing the current, brings them back, multiplied and increased by the law of attraction, and lays them again at your feet. So to them who give in this direction, it shall be given, "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."

The Sabbath school should be hailed as the hand

of mercy and love, reached down from heaven into each family, to aid them in training their offspring, to respond to their pious counsels, to sanction their instructions, and save their erring children; laying its foundation at the threshold of intellect, it completes its design in the consummation of their highest hopes and happiness. The angels, from their sublime spheres, never look upon a sight more delightful than the assembling of a Sabbath school to worship God. The long looked for Sabbath at length arrives, which is hailed with transport, and welcomed with delight; and soon the merry bell peals amid the soft, pure sunlight, starting a hundred little ones from their dwelling-places, who come flying into the ways, while the dew yet sparkles upon the corn; from many a farm-house, far and near, they issue forth, down the mountains, up the valleys, and along the by ways, their little guileless feet come flying as if the morning had lent them wings to soar to his service. Delight glows in every bosom, joy beams from every eye, and "Thou God, seest us," each little heart can feel. Here is a beautiful world in miniature; here is love, and joy, and hope, and fear, and reason; and, indeed, the whole circle of the powers and passions, all directed to their proper objects by the unerring Guide-Book of heaven; and here all may rejoice in the lovely exemplification of that sentiment of Christian democracy, "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all." After the solemn tone of fervent prayer, follows the sweet melody of praise, lisped from these infant lips. Methinks the angels bending o'er the clouds, never look upon spectacles of greater

interest, or listen to sounds of richer melody. And surely there can be no sublimer motive than actuates these children.

They have come to give their little hearts to the blessed Saviour; to learn his will, and lisp his praise. The time when, is the Sabbath; the market-day of the soul, when she lays in the provisions which are to refresh her, and the materials which are to employ her the ensuing week; the Sabbath — "the pearl of days, the gem of the week, the torch of time," a fragment of heaven! The place where is the sanctuary; where God has inscribed his great name, where they sit down beneath the shadow of Christ's ordinances, and refreshing themselves with the river of life which flows at their feet, rise up with renewed strength to pursue a heavenly journey.

The text-book is the Bible — the laws of God, systems in sentences, not only seeds of happiness wafted from the islands of the blessed, drops of crystal dew scattered from seraphs' wings, and wreaths of the rainbow spray from the pure cataract of truth; but rich gems that drop down from the lips of God, — flashes of the dayspring from on high, shed from the windows of the skies, — grains of the diamond sand on the radiant floor of heaven, rising in sunny dust behind the chariot of the Almighty, — glorious for lifegiving, and redolent of sanctity in heaven; as the fumes of the hallowed incense that veil the throne of the Most High; as the beaded bubbles that sparkle on the rim of the cup of immortality; streams of living light are they, from the pure fountain of intelligence; words of wisdom which

profit to everlasting life. These are the teachings of the Sabbath school.

And the teachers are those whose hearts are warmed at God's altar, who by a heavenly impulse have been brought together, — and their prayer for the children is, the "Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." Each Sabbath morning kindles up a thousand new joys on earth, and adds melody to every harp in bliss. And why should not the dews of heavenly grace fall most plentifully here? Why should not the cloud of mercy rest upon such scenes?

Our hearts are hopeful in this direction over every Sabbath day's services, and exhilarating is the thought that in this country alone, there convene every Sabbath day, three million of children in such assemblages, where two hundred thousand teachers are employed in imparting instruction from the very fountain of light and truth, without the medium of commentaries or expositions, and unalloyed with human wisdom, — directing it upon these millions of immortal minds, — and this at the very *season* when impressions are most easily and deeply made. The heart of the nation may well hope over this institution, as the greatest that was ever launched upon the ocean of human benevolence. A single evangelical denomination has estimated, that, should their past prosperity be continued during the next fifty years, the opening of the coming century will exhibit in their own embrace, the sublime and heart-

cheering spectacle of about six hundred thousand Sabbath schools, six and a half millions of teachers guiding thirty-two and a half millions of children to truth, purity, and heaven. And what will be the importance of this institution to the entire church and the nation at that no distant day? With almost every conceivable appliance and facility for accomplishing its purpose; with the faith, sympathies, and coöperation of the wise and good; with the light of past experience; with hundreds of thousands for its present statistics; with regular organizations and zealous agents in action; and with the *world* for a *field?* The mind is overwhelmed and enraptured at the thought of what the Sabbath school is to accomplish for the renovation of the world. What must be the consummation of such a beginning? There are yet millions of children in our own land, and hundreds of millions in our world for its scope. Its glowing, benignant hand is to gather jewels by scores and by hundreds from all the strata of human society, and placing them under the polishing influence of high moral and religious principle, prepare them to shed their lustre upon the world, and deck in heaven the Saviour's crown. It is to set up family altars, and awaken "sacred songs" in abodes unused to prayer or praise. It is to sanctify the Sabbath where it has been a day of sport and revelry. It is to gather households around the hearthstone, and beguile the winter night hours with Bunyan's mystic "dream," or the enchanting narrative of the "Great Reformation." Its trophies are to be dispersed from the extreme east to the furthest west of our great country. Some of them looking out

each Sabbath morning on the waves of the Atlantic, some dwelling upon the borders of our inland lakes and rivers, while others witness the going down of the sun in the far-off waters of the Pacific Ocean. And the supplying of these millions of children with a copy of the Bible or Testament, is virtually to supply half as many families, and three times as many individuals.

Centuries ago a Russian czar inscribed on a guide-board, at the southern gate of Moscow, these words, "The road to Constantinople." That inscription has ever since turned the thoughts of a nation towards the city whose proud name it bears. I would that a signal were written over the gateway of the Sabbath school institution, that should attract the eager crowds passing on to vanity and vice in a ceaseless march, like the Muscovites towards the city of the Sultan, and which should lure them to mosques and minarets, of which the Bosphorus and all its harems cannot boast. But monuments of marble being too cold, and the chisel too lifeless, the finger of God has traced the superscription upon warmer, more sensitive, and diviner monuments,— the hearts of the myriads of children which have been blessed. These are the triumphal arches, the lofty columns, the enduring monuments erected for coming generations to the praise of divine grace and the encouragement of human hope.

Were individuals, like some ancient artists, to pass through our dwellings, and with rods tipped with an invisible phosphoric flame, to mark the internal surface of our habitations, their acts would

appear unmeaning, and no visible effect would be apparent; but should the windows be darkened, or the night close in upon us, immediately lines and figures would flash in brilliant corruscations from all our walls and ceilings. So when Sabbath schools are assembled in their thousands of places in city and country, and multitudes of parents and teachers are seeking to inculcate in their minds the lessons of divine knowledge, the process of instruction may appear arduous, and their assiduous and systematic toil productive of little good. But as life rolls on, and the lights of the world are put out by affliction or the breath of the divine Spirit, through these humble toils the graces of salvation and the features of holiness may be luminously developed in thousands of individuals, families, and social scenes; the fruit of their toil appears in the vigor that it imparts to whole generations.

"Let parents, teachers, and coworkers, then, go forth over the earth with the word of God as a pencil of heavenly light, and draw the invisible lines of Sunday school instruction over the moral character of our cities and towns, villages, and extended country; draw them lengthily over all lands, from pole to pole, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; draw them thickly over every family and social scene, and write over the whole surface of human society, and the walls of all human habitations, and the escutcheons of all social institutions, and the tablets of all human hearts, the name of God, Immortality, Jesus, Salvation, Judgment to come, Hell, Heaven. And when in the darkness of affliction, the light of earthly pros-

perity and hope are withdrawn, these invisible lines will be developed in the emblems of religious doctrine, the grace of salvation, and the images of Christian virtue and benevolence. And all lands luminous with divine knowledge, and all hearts instinct with heavenly grace, will flash out in the brilliant corruscations of millennial glory; showing a world redeemed by teaching children the way of life." And the reflex good alone, even in this world, is an ample reward to every parent who has lifted a finger in this great work; for in seeking the salvation of the lost children of the world, he has secured the happiness of his own. Suppose some providential event were about to remove our children to a distant land, far from our society, supervision, and counsel; should we not give them up more cheerfully, and experience less fear and unpleasant anxiety in their behalf, if we had previously fitted upon them the armor of righteousness, if we had instructed them thoroughly unto their duties and dangers, and prepared them for the worst? Or suppose they were removed from us by death, would not this same consideration gild the tears we should shed upon their lifeless forms, cause our memories to rest as a benediction on their graves, and inspire the hopes with which we should follow them? Or suppose we were about to die ourselves, and our little, heart-broken group, gathered about us, had drawn near to hear our dying words, how could we die and leave these children the prey and victims of a merciless world, feeling that we had not discharged our duty towards them? Would it not strew our pillow with flowers, and soothe our expiring spirits, to feel that we had offered them up

on the altar of consecration, introduced them to their peculiar means of grace, and committed the keeping of their souls unto a faithful Creator?

The Christian parent has ground to hope that the seed which he has sown will blossom over his grave, that his hand will point to the Lamb of God long after it is palsied in the dust; that being dead he may yet speak words of life and of light; that the seed which he has planted may germinate when naught but his freed spirit lingers near to watch the development, and rejoice in the growth. Blissful thought, that the great Creator in his covenant and providence has manifested such mercy, made such ample provision for our dear little helpless offspring, that not one of these little ones is left to perish; though death, unrestrained, is permitted to make his merciless havoc here, and disease, with its thousand nameless ills, marks them for his prize, that there is scarcely no circle which is not broken, — no parents who have not contributed to these awful demands: —

> "There is no flock, however watched and tended,
> But one dead lamb is there;
> There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
> But hath one vacant chair."

Yet, delightful thought, that these loved ones, which have sparkled, been exhaled, and have gone, are gone to their home above the stars; that they have become little birds with angel wings, and gone up to build their nests under the altar of God. That amid the great throng they lift their dimpled hands and spotless faces, always beholding the face of their

Father who is in heaven; that the sparks which have been in anguish smitten from so many parent's hearts, are flaming on high, and flashing before the throne. We miss them on our journey, like Joseph and Mary, but unlike them, we are aware that they are "sitting in the midst of the doctors in the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions." We are consoled with the thought, that though like tender buds they have been snatched from their parent stem, though the little hasty sojourners were called to bid adieu to the world, when they scarce had sipped the cup of life; yet these buds of promise are taken from the earth's rough, chilling airs, to bloom in a more congenial clime. God gave, and took, and he will restore; he doeth all things well. These dear little ones are growing up in *heaven*, in the presence of God, and embrace of the Saviour; breathing the pure, celestial atmosphere, hymning the rich melodies, and learning to play the ever-tuned harps; developing their powers in full conformity to heaven's laws. The parent compares the number gone and remaining; his heart, his affections are divided; he looks hither and thither, he gazes upon the stars, and reflects that in his departed children he lives and walks in those sublime heights, as well as upon the earth in his surviving ones; he is conscious that they cannot come to him, but he and his little charge may go to them. And how does he bless Almighty God that heaven has in the Sabbath school a portico, an outer court, upon the sinful, perilous earth, where the young sojourners can hear the sweet whispers, the gentle wooings, and see the shining hands and feet of their youthful companions

above, and through which they can go up to their united, blissful, and eternal embrace before the throne.

"With flowing tears, and thankful hearts,
We give our children up to thee.
Receive them Lord, into thine arms;
Thine may they ever be."

CHAPTER XVI.

INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE.

CHILDREN, that you may appreciate the importance of your institution, it is necessary you should appreciate your *own* importance; this you will apprehend when you consider your origin, design, relations, duties, and destination.

First. The creation of man was the miraculous result of the council of the Deity; while the natural elements brought forth abundantly every living thing, man came directly from the hand that gave angels and worlds their birth; and he alone of all created existence was made in the image of the Creator, after his likeness and for his peculiar pleasure. And it is worthy of notice, that God made but *one* man and woman; though he commanded the earth and sea to bring forth *abundantly* the fowl of the air, the cattle, the creeping things, and the beast of the earth. But man stood alone in the midst of the terrestrial creation, its head and "masterpiece;" and while all other creatures bent their eyes to the ground, he raised his look to heaven, — and while the beams of the sun gave light, he saw; while the thunder rolled and the waves of the sea roared, his tongue uttered distinct and intelligible sounds; the moon and stars

glittered in light and beauty, but his countenance indicated superior illumination. How wonderful was man! Though an "insect — infinite!" While a "worm," a monarch, "half dust and half deity."

Secondly. All other things were created *for* man, and presented to his hand for meat; "every herb and tree upon the face of all the earth, every beast of the field, and fowl of the air, and every thing that crept upon the earth wherein there was life."

Thirdly. Man was authorized to give names to all other creatures, according to their respective natures, and endowed with power and authority over them; he was to be "fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth." And while all other creatures are represented as having life in themselves, as they came from the elements, the human body came from Jehovah's hand, and the soul from his bosom, — strangely compounded, and marvellously mixed. Within the temple of the body he built the holiest of holies, — the soul; his last and noblest workmanship, the finish and ornament, upon which he bestowed his most mature deliberations and expended his richest treasures; in whose sanctuary he was to dwell, and upon the throne of whose affections he was to sit supreme. And in each human bosom there glows this ethereal flame, kindled by the Almighty's breath, to survive the "wreck of matter, the war of elements, and the crash of worlds."

The creation of each human being has occupied the mind and skill of Jehovah; the preservation of

each man has occupied his hand, the dangers of each has awakened his solicitude, and the redemption of each soul has cost his death on the cross in the person of Christ. God has sent his only Son, his gracious Spirit, his instructive providence, the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the Scriptures, and the ministry, to each man, to bless and save him.

All things were made for man and are operated for him; "all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or things present, or things to come, all are yours."

"Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use? proud man answers, 'T is for mine:
For me kind nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;
Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew,
The juice nectarious, and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.'"

"Know'st thou th'importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole: one soul outweighs them all."

Learn, therefore, from these considerations, the importance which God attaches to individual man. He doubtless governs the world in reference to each man, and dwells in each contrite soul, having created it so magnificent in its nature, so capacious of enjoyment, so vast in its desires, that nothing but himself can fill it, and all things weigh nothing in the

balance with it; whose influence affects the world, and whose prayers move Omnipotence.

Consider the responsibility which God originally placed, and still continues upon man. His command extended to all the earth, and his influence was to affect the world; he dwelt upon the throne of Eden, and swayed his sceptre over the terrestrial creation; —heaven was his crown of glory, and earth his realm; and so responsible was his position, that the action of his hand was essentially and eternally to affect every soul, and everybody of the human race, through all successive generations to the end of time. Had he withstood the tempter, heaven had smiled, and earth had been blessed. But alas! he plucked the gilded bait interdicted, and Eden was lost.

> "Earth felt the wound,
> And nature from her seat
> Sighing, through all her works
> Gave signs of woe, that all was lost!"

And where is the eye, from that hour to the present, which has not wept in sorrow over that deed? Where is the heart that has not throbbed in anguish, or the bosom that never heaved a sigh? And where is the living being that shall not die in consequence of that fatal act, while their hearts in life, are but "muffled drums beating funeral marches to the tomb?"

Noah, of diluvian days, built a life-boat for the elected world, and navigated the representatives of the living creation over the boundless flood of waters, causing one part of the world to look to him hopefully, and the other part despairingly.

Moses stood upon the summit of Sinai, and amid the thunder, and lightning, and flames, reached down from heaven to earth the law of God, which is to be binding upon every human being; which is destined to sway the impulses of every living soul, and bear its full force in heaven to all eternity.

Abraham gave an impulse which the world shall feel, — in him and his seed, "all the families of the earth are to be blessed." He became the father of the faithful, his bosom a type of heaven, and God committed to him a covenant, which he is to hold up to the enchantment of the world. Among his seed appeared the Messiah, at the mention of whose name, as a mediator, there was "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour;" the long desired of all nations, "before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, of things in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea;" who is to be the great theme of song, and centre of attraction in heaven, through the ceaseless cycles of eternity, — while all other names and deeds are measurably forgotten, and all other beings are lost in contemplation of his great and gracious atonement.

David, a great mind allied to a great soul, in rare and noble union, was a man after God's own heart, and king of his chosen, peculiar people; for whom all other nations were but "bread," and marks for their arrows; his intellect enlightened, his heart warmed at heaven's altar, and his lips vibrating beneath the divine fingers, poured forth the book of Psalms, as a grateful tribute to all-ruling heaven, for his goodness and his mercy. And how omnipotent are these "lively oracles" in arousing the stupid

imagination, attuning the slumbering lips, and inspiring the heavenly hopes of man. His diction has enriched the speech of legions on earth, awakened a thousand new melodies, and lent a charm to every harp in heaven; and the time is approaching when the earth, regenerated, shall chant the anthems of David. Truly his voice is to be the melody of the world, as it hangs enchanted upon his lips, and ascends with him to the temple gates.

The apostles, with a thousand brave spirits in each bosom, laid their Briarean hands upon society, shook the strong-holds of iniquity, and "turned the world upside down;" changing the views, character, pursuits, hearts, and lives of men; breaking up the haunts of vice, and drying the unnumbered sources of guilty gain and guilty pleasure. They arrayed themselves against the world; condemning its religion, its gods, its heaven. They caused the people to despise their idols, forsake their altars, desert their temples; they spread light and knowledge, planted institutions, organized society. They proceeded, against the superstition of the multitude,— against the interest, influence, and craft of their priesthood, — against the ridicule of wits, the reasoning of sages, the policy of cabinets, and the prowess of armies, — against the axe, the cross, and the stake; — extending their conquests, and gathering their laurels alike from the snows of the mountains, the green fields of the valleys, the waves of the sea, and the sands of the desert.

The altars of impiety crumbled before their march; the glimmer of the schools disappeared in their light; power felt his arm wither at their glance. They

wrote epistles for the world to read, and which will be pondered by all the nations and generations of time; they planted principles which will absolutely triumph over every opposing obstacle, and draw earth upward to the embrace of heaven, amid shoutings and exultations that will move the universe of God.

Luther, the morning star of the Reformation, and bravest of all earth's brave sons, had given his hand and his heart to the work, and he had rather *die* than change; he withstood the thunder and lightning of the Romish Vatican, and their devils, though "thick as tiles on the houses;" and when the Pope hurled at him the fatal anathema of excommunication, he seized the flaming thunderbolt, hurled it back to the Pope, and excommunicated him.

He unchained the Bible from its secluded moorings, — let loose from the dark convent the word of life, whose power is to shake the world, and shape every soul, — that word which is to sound through the earth, echoing and reëchoing from every mountain, cliff, and valley; running the nations through, and the earth around, until every mortal ear shall hear, and every heart feel its omnipotence, and the world is summoned to rectitude and happiness. He struck a blow upon the infernal system of Roman Catholicism, which shall not lose its force, till it crushes to powder the hydra-headed monster, which has been "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;" until this Dagon of spiritual ignorance and oppression falls before the ark of liberty, earth keeps jubilee, and creation is moved.

The mother of John Wesley taught him the alphabet nineteen times, failing of permanent success the eighteenth; but he afterwards became a minister and reformer, taking for his motto, "The world is my parish." And he is said to have travelled some two hundred and fifty thousand miles, principally on horseback, written two hundred volumes of books, preached more than forty thousand sermons, and given away a hundred thousand dollars in charity. He was the institutor of an evangelical sect, which numbered, while he lived, two thousand ministers, and eighty thousand church-members; and is now multiplied to thousands and tens of thousands of apostles, and more than a million of disciples, scattered throughout the entire world. Little did that mother realize that she was training one who was to take the lead in awakening a corrupt church from the slumbers of generations; that she was by him shining in the golden candlestick of the church, preaching the gospel of reformation in both hemispheres, and spreading scriptural holiness through the earth.

The first missionaries to the heathen performed the sublimest deeds of man! They struck a blow upon the empire of darkness that has echoed through the universe. Carey in the East, who said to his friend, "You hold the rope" of prayer, and "I will launch upon the ocean," corresponding with his words, "We must attempt great things for God, and expect great things from God."

And the three young men upon this continent, who, in 1807, became engaged in the same enterprise, spoke words which have palpitated in every

heart, dwelt upon every tongue, and found a response beyond the seas. They performed an act which has moved all the realms of intellectual creation; they dropped a pebble into the great ocean of heathendom, which will move its profoundest depths and widest extremes, and rest not till its abyss is purified, —

> "Till earth's remotest nation,
> Has learned Messiah's name."

Some years ago, upon the other continent, a female Sunday school teacher sought among the ragged, filthy children of the street, a class. The first Sabbath she succeeded in bringing in three little boys; procuring for each, from the superintendent, a suit of clothes. The second Sabbath one, whose name was Morrison, was missing. She sought the truant, and brought him back, and for four successive Sabbaths she did the same, though he came with great reluctance. She then found it necessary to procure for him another suit of clothes, the former having become soiled and ragged; but the boy was still wayward, though the teacher still persevered, till she had procured for him three suits of clothes, and labored and prayed for him for three months. When, to her surprise, the Sabbath morning found the young lad in his place in the Sabbath school, of his own accord. The victory was won, the turning-point of the child's destiny was reached; from that Sabbath he became a good boy, and soon a good man, a Christian, a doctor of divinity, a missionary to the heathen, and translated the Bible for the first time into the language of the Chinese, which has

already shaken the false foundations of the empire, and is destined to renovate that mighty portion of the globe.

When that female ran to speak to the young man, she was, though unconsciously, proclaiming words of light, truth, and life, to the mightiest empire upon the earth; she was speaking with the voice of God to the millions and millions of China yet unborn, who shall rise up to read the Bible translated by Dr. Morrison.

About 1816, Rev. Edwin Dwight found a Sandwich Island boy in New Haven, whose name was Henry Obookiah, sitting alone upon the steps and crying, — much sympathy was manifested for him, and there being some other foreign youths in the country, it was thought advisable to establish a school, in which they and others might be educated, and if suitable persons, sent back to their native land as missionaries. The General Association of Connecticut moved in the matter, and appointed a board of agency, and at the same time it was under the control of the American Board. The result was, the establishment of the Sandwich Island mission, which in less than one half a century has wrought a millennium in those islands, lifting them from the lowest depths of heathenism, to a position among the Christian nations of the earth.

Much less than half a century witnesses there the complete triumphs of Christianity, — in the organization of a hundred Christian churches, with twenty-six thousand church-members, nearly twenty-four thousand religious schools, more than a billion printed pages, and a flood of light and life pouring forth

upon the surrounding nations of darkness. He who stopped to speak and sympathize with the little, weeping, foreign child, was performing a work which the day of judgment only can declare.

The Pilgrims were a feeble band of exiles who had forsaken their homes, the graves of their fathers and scenes of their childhood, and in a pilotless bark, had launched upon the unknown and boundless ocean; — but never before was there such a cargo launched upon the deep; never before did the billows bear such a treasure — so full of the seeds of things. Their embarkation was the dawn of a new era in the advancement of civilization, the knowledge of true liberty, and the spread of a pure Christianity throughout the world. They sought to establish religious and civil liberty in the wilderness of America, to found on an eternal rock, — the rock of truth, externally symbolled by the Plymouth Rock, — a new empire of freedom, destined to solve successfully the problem of popular self-government, and to surpass in extent of territorial domain, in greatness and glory, and in the production of the greatest good to the greatest number, all other empires, ancient or modern, which history records in her instructive annals, or which play their parts on the grand theatre of national existence. Having arrived at the new world, and cast the anchor of their ship into the harbor, and of their hopes within the vail, three hours holds them in convention in the cabin of the Mayflower, during which brief space they prepared a constitution for the adoption of the world. The first place where they step becomes immortal, and proves the stepping-stone of empires; their first work is to erect a shrine,

at which every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. Already their progeny are scattered through the length and breadth of the land, to the number of nearly a quarter of a million, for every individual in that drooping company of one hundred.

The tattered sails of the Mayflower, have multiplied into the thousand flying pennants, and fluttering wings of commerce, which court every breeze, whiten on every wave, and grace every part of the world. And that solitary storm-rocked barque, was the pioneer of the mighty host of pilots, police-men, ocean racers, and floating palaces, and vehicles of commerce which are hurrying to and fro, upon the highway of nations from ocean to ocean. And in place of the simple compact which was originally signed, there is exhibited to the admiration of mankind, a constitution of republican government for all this growing family of prosperous States, and we may be indulged in the bright vision of the certain and unprecedented progress of this work, which is still but in its infancy. "It must extend," says Mr. Everett, "and what is not done directly by ourselves, must be done by other governments and other races, by the light of our example. The work,—the work must go on. It must reach at the north to the enchanted cave of the magnet, within never-melting barriers of arctic ice; it must bow to the Lord of day on the altar peaks of Chimborazo; it must look up and worship the Southern Cross. From the easternmost cliff on the Atlantic, that blushes on the kindling dawn, to the last promontory on the Pacific, which catches the parting kiss of the setting sun, as he goes down to his pavilion of purple and gold; it

must make the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, in the gladsome light of morals and letters and arts. Emperors and kings and parliaments, — the oldest and the strongest governments in Europe, — must engage in this work in some part or other of the continent." Truly theirs was the *Opus Magnum, the* great work of humanity, — and while the ocean roars, the torches of heaven shed their light, and the earth rolls on her course, the sainted names of the "Pilgrim Fathers" shall live, embalmed in the memory of the nations; and their sublime deeds shall stand on the brightest annals of the world's history. Who will say they have not moved the world? Already their deed has rocked the throne of kings, thundered at the gates of tyranny, and shaken all the massive foundations of oppression, prophetic of the day of universal emancipation. They kindled the fires of liberty, which will cast their effulgence throughout the entire world, and send down a flood of light through all coming generations, glowing brighter and brighter till the millennium.

Granville Sharp, "England's earliest abolitionist," in lifting his hand and uttering his voice for the emancipation of the enslaved of his race, performed an act which has already moved the world pro and con; generous liberty has rejoiced, and tyranny has trembled and raged. He, and his coadjutors, spoke words which have sounded in every heart, and dwelt on every tongue, and whose echo will not leave the earth till this voice of liberty and of God, shall summon and welcome to freedom the nations of oppression. He kindled a flame which will rise and spread

till the melted manacles fall from every shackled limb, the night of Slavery vanishes, and triumphant liberty shouts her jubilee around oppression's funeral pile.

Mrs. Stowe, with her pen, has added a fresh impulse which will hasten on the earth to the goal of universal emancipation.

The same is true of Rev. Dr. Worcester, who, in 1814, published a pamphlet entitled "A Solemn Review of the Custom of War." This production was a message to the world from the Prince of Peace; it was an olive-branch plucked from the highest pinnacle of the earth, as a token that the waters of strife should be abated. In 1828, it organized a National Peace Society in New York. In 1843 it called a World's Peace Convention in London, in 1849 one at Paris, in 1850 another in Germany; and it is still speaking on and summoning the nations of the world to build on the foundation and worship at the shrine of universal brotherly love.

Sir Isaac Newton, in his great and philosophical mind, grasped at the universe, and with the rod of research, stirred the vast ocean of truth, — revealing the sublime laws which move and regulate the myriads of unnumbered worlds. The key of knowledge was put into his hand to unlock the gates of the temple of science, enter within its sacred portals, and bring forth its golden treasures.

Daniel Webster moved the political world. His brilliant genius electrified the nation, running through, blazing over, and flashing around it; his rich eloquence descended upon the American Republic like

a shower of gold, making his footsteps radiant, his memory illustrious, and his name will blaze forever as a star of the first magnitude in the intellectual and political firmament.

Isabella, queen of Spain, pledged her jewelry for Columbus, by which he was aided in the discovery of half the globe; and had it not been for her magnanimity, this twin sister of the ancient world might have lain undiscovered upon the bosom of the deep for five thousand years longer. But the mighty Columbus, while in the night of adversity dreaming of a voyage across the unknown ocean, was destined to realize that dream in a discovery greater far than earth can realize, or time declare; and while seeking for aid in his undertaking, he was searching for a continent. And Queen Isabella, in bestowing her jewels upon Columbus, was embellishing a nation. Their mighty efforts for an outfit, were performed for the human *race.*

In the history of this country, there was a little girl, who soon grew to womanhood, had one President of the United States by her side, as her companion, and another in her arms as her offspring; exerting over them all the influence of woman, of wife, and of mother, — at those critical junctures, too, which were the nation's crises, — the periods of the formation, and defence of the Constitution. When the nation was taking her position among the powers of the earth, and pioneering the path of republicanism; and who can tell what part this female performed, in laying and fixing the foundations of this great republic? And the Sabbath school teacher should recollect, that either girl in the class may be

eligible to the same responsible office, — that as she runs and speaks to the little one, she may be addressing the queen of the nation.

There was an American mother, who held in her arms a little boy, wholly unconscious, as she moulded his tender mind and attuned his youthful powers, that he was soon to be the father of this great nation; that his sword was to leap from its scabbard to revenge a nation's wrong; that he was to be a model patriot for the world, blending in one all the noble traits of humanity. "The first in war, the first in peace, and the first in the hearts of his countrymen;" — that he was to rock the shrouded old thrones of the earth, shaking kings and monarchs from their dizzy summits, and unfurling the banner of liberty to a world in thraldom; that no child will be born in America to the end of time, who will not learn to speak and praise his name; and "when thrones, kingdoms, and empires shall have crumbled to dust, and the last vestige of time become extinct, *eternity* itself shall catch the glowing theme, and dwell with increasing rapture on the name of Washington."

And who can tell what part that mother performed for the nation, in training this champion of her liberties? Who will say that she was not through him inscribing principles upon the very foundations of the mightiest of republics, — that she was not directing to the highway of universal republicanism? An honor equivalent to being the mother of kings or the queen of the world!

Robert Raikes was stirred by heaven to institute the Sabbath school for the salvation of the rising

generations; and he lived to see three thousand Sabbath school children, sitting under this vine which his right hand had planted, in the British empire alone. The seed which he had dropped in a propitious soil was already waving in a thousand fields of golden harvest, and it is a remarkable fact, that one of the Sabbath school scholars of Robert Raikes is still living in Illinois, and, of course, a devoted member of a Christian church, whose daily prayer to God is, that he will multiply Sabbath schools. She delights in showing the tickets which she received from his hand, and in repeating large portions of the gospel. She is said to be able to repeat nearly the whole of the New Testament Scripture. Truly her early instructions make her rejuvenant amid the frosts of age. What wonders has she lived to behold! And when the present myriads of scholars shall have become teachers, and the thousands of teachers become instructors of Bible classes, when the church shall fully have adopted the institution, enrolling her name upon its records, and the nations of the world shall have turned their feet unto its testimonies, what will be the importance of this instrumentality? And what at the day of judgment — when Robert Raikes shall stand before God and say: "Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me, for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts?" It will then appear that he had broken a branch from the tree of life, whose golden fruitage, miraculously multiplied, had fed the nations; that he had struck a hidden spring which had moved all the moral machinery of the universe. What myriads

and myriads will his eyes behold approaching the throne, with shining feet, with palms of victory in their hands, songs of melody on their lips, and crowns of glory upon their heads; whose glowing hands are reaching for their crowns, and whose voices are chiming in the great anthem of the redeemed? If Sir Isaac Newton was overwhelmed, and fell prostrate at the discovery of the law which attracts all worlds to a common centre, what shall be the transport of Robert Raikes, who invented an institution which has attracted so many immortal spirits to the throne of God? How shall he endure this far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? What an errand was that which led him through the streets of Gloucester, and suggested to him the Sunday school idea! And the work which he then performed was for the church of the Redeemer, and for the race of man.

Neal Dow, the author of the Maine temperance law, is a star that arose in the East, and is shedding his mild radiance upon State after State, territory after territory; and every session of legislation, every change of administration, every political revolution and providential vicissitude, will add new lustre to his deed, until forty confederate republics shall mingle their pure flames, and cast their glowing effulgence upon the surrounding nations; until, like the sun in the heavens, it fills the whole earth with its light, and ushers in a day of jubilee, when the fruits of the earth, and bread of the children's mouths shall cease to be converted into an element that sets both soul and body on fire of hell. Neal

Dow has literally dried a flood of tears, assuaged an ocean of grief, and saved a multitude which cannot be numbered. Long may his portrait hang in my study, among those of the world's benefactors!

CHAPTER XVII.

INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE — CONTINUED.

LET us contemplate another class of individuals, who have moved the world not less effectually, but in another and opposite direction.

Napoleon Bonaparte, the scourge of nations, grasped the world in his unbounded ambition; led his desolating armies through most of the capitals of Europe; consumed nations in sacrifice to his pride, and sought to swim to the throne of thrones, through seas of blood and tears. The world shuddered at the mention of his name, and the earth trembled at the march of his soldiery and clash of his armies. Rome shook on her seven hills. Power shrunk before the irresistible monarch. He is said to have shortened the average stature of the whole thirty-six millions of the French nation two inches, by selecting and killing the tallest of his subjects in war.

The czar of Russia, a merciless despot, fixes his relentless grasp upon the hearts and minds of seventy millions of men; and annually sacrifices fifty thousand human beings upon the altar of his unholy ambition. He could recklessly say, that he expected in a single war to lose thirty thousand men, apparently prizing them no more than so many dollars.

Such is his position, that a recent crisis in his reign made a single word seriously to affect mighty nations, if not the entire world. His *yea* would give peace to the nations, or his *nay* throw them into mutual warfare. When the allied powers proposed to him conditions of peace, his answer was to make him resemble the Prince of Peace, or, like a shrill blast from the trumpet of Mars, was to summon the nations to deadliest conflict, and cause half the world to redden with the conflagration of war; and the earth now shakes with the tread of armies and the clash of conflict, while tidings anon are reaching our ears of thousands and tens of thousands slain, and countless thousands of hearts are bleeding and breaking.

The Pope of Rome, holds in his hands, in a degree, the heartstrings of nearly two hundred millions of men, about a fifth part of the *whole human race*,

> Moving them at pleasure to and fro,
> And bringing them trembling at his toe.

He forges the chains which hold myriads and nations in the dominion of ignorance, superstition, and death.

The emperor of China, sways his sceptre unrestrained over two hundred and thirty millions of the human race, — an awful balance of power. O, what a reservoir would his heart be for the grace of God, changing that mighty functionary to a nursing father, (and his consort to a nursing mother,) that should lift his arm to strike down and remove the temples, altars, and idols of heathenism, and set up the worship of the living and true God; thus caus-

ing a nation to be born in a day, and giving Christianity an impulse that should bless the world!

Alexander conquered the world by the marshalling of armies, and the power of murderous weapons.

Cæsar is said to have slain a million of men in his wars, captured a million more, and broken *ten* millions of hearts, — "What millions died that Cæsar might be great!"

The present chief magistrate of our Union has by a single act, fastened the shackles of oppression upon a million of human beings; by a single stroke of his pen he has enslaved a nation. He is elevated by the hand of suffrage to a position, where it was recently his prerogative to say over a vast tract of territory, let there be liberty and light, or let there be oppression and darkness, and it should be so; he said, let there be oppression and darkness; — though a son of a free State, though rocked in the cradle of liberty, breathing its pure air and roaming o'er its verdant hills, he has bowed the knee and done homage to the Baal of human slavery; and probably perpetuated this ignominious curse to untold years. He has invaded the sanctuary of freedom with clanking chains and gored manacles, thus wounding the "hearts of many nations;" and millions yet unborn may rise up under the withering blight of oppression to curse him for his deed. If President Pierce had not signed the Nebraska Bill it would have been *dead;* but now its chained legions are on their march to occupy there, their living graves; — *power and interest now,* but *justice* is with *God,* and will speak hereafter!

Voltaire sought to cut down all the trees in Paradise, and to overthrow with his single arm a system

of religion, which required, as he said, a master and twelve disciples to establish; and as if poured into the fountains, the fatal poison of his infidelity has descended through all the strata, and flowed down the channels of society, that there is no nation which has not felt its desolating effects.

These are a few names of individuals, who have loomed up above the lifeless masses of society, like the century aloes amid the daily flowers, that blossom once in a hundred years; like the monarch oak above the shrubbery, that defies and battles the elements for three centuries, or like the fearless eagle whose untired pinions are wet in the clouds and the storms of a hundred years; — individuals whose deeds are registered on time's eternal record, and at whom all the telescopes of the world have been levelled to look, either at their brightness or their spots; whose names have perfumed the world and been her boast, or "smelt to heaven with rank offence;" upon whose head eternal sunshine or eternal ignominy has settled; who have moved or retarded the wheels of improvement for centuries; whose voices have given tone, and hands given shape, whose master-spirits have swayed the whole mass, and moved all the elements of society: some of whom have left the nations a legacy of wisdom and prosperity, while others, dealing destruction at every blow, have cursed the earth by living, and blessed it only by dying. And I refer to them to show how much often depends upon one man; how mighty a mission Divine Providence often commits to an individual, or permits him to accomplish. Hence the estimate that should be put upon individual man; and the duty which

society owes to each man, or rather the duty which each man owes to himself; the importance of every man, especially every *young* man preparing himself for great and glorious issues; for who can tell what part is assigned him in the great drama of the world?

There is no position in the gift of the nation to which every child may not aspire, from the wretched hovel of the beggar, to the sumptuous palaces of the capital; thus making himself the gaze and envy of all the sovereigns of the earth; for nature's noblemen *earn* their rank rather than inherit it; they ascend to their station by their own strength, they are not borne to it upon the shoulders of a titled ancestry.

Though some men in our country are born great, no one is greatly born. We have no royal roads to power, and the transit with us is often rapid, from the harpoon to the pen, and from the plough to the presidency.

It is usually not so much what nature or providence does for individuals, as what they do for *themselves*. God makes the powers of men, and assists in their development so far as they promote his glory, yet the great instrumentality in the hands of men through divine grace, and by divine permission, is usually their own efforts; "God helps those who help themselves," is as true a maxim as ever was penned. "I mean to make myself emperor of Rome," said a midnight student to a fellow pupil, who entered his room at that dead hour, — and he pursued his object until he accomplished his purpose.

"The heights by great men reached and kept,
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

All that God, Providence, and men can do for an individual will be ineffectual without *himself*, his own personal efforts.

One has very truly said, "It is not that which is done for a pupil that is most valuable to him and others, but that which he is led to do for himself." And when Heaven assigns to individuals especial and responsible missions, it is perhaps generally because he sees in them a fitness and qualification for the work. The heart of Moses had throbbed mightily in behalf of the oppressed nation of the Hebrews, and he had lingered long about the Mount of God, ere he saw there the burning bush, and received his commission to proceed and deliver this oppressed people of the Lord. The eye of Omniscience surveying the desolations of heathenism, rested upon one whom he saw would be a man that would "command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," and thus be a fit father of a new nation, ere Abraham was called from the degradations of idolatry to the worship of the true God, the responsibilities of a national covenant, and the promise of a world wide blessing.

Nehemiah had surveyed mournfully the desolations of Jerusalem; he had witnessed her dishonored sepulchres, her walls broken down, her gates burned with fire, and her towers in decay; he had walked up and down the walls and measured the ruins; he had wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed day and night, before the God of heaven, on account of these desolations, ere he was commissioned to repair the wastes of Zion, to rebuild the walls of the city of

God under the sanction and support of Omnipotence; in those times of peril which required him to hold a weapon in one hand, whilst he labored with the other upon the works.

David had probably never been permitted to fall for the warning of the world, and rise again for its encouragement and example, unless Omniscience had seen in his bosom an early foundation of integrity, which would raise him above the fall, and cause him to shine brighter than ever before. And Paul, persecutor as he was, was a man who would have *died* for the *truth;* hence he was called to embrace and defend the truth. The pity and sympathy of Robert Raikes was freely given to the ignorant, degraded, and neglected children, ere *he* was given to them, to institute the means of their salvation.

Carey, while a shoemaker, possessed a heart that burned intensely and incessantly with desire for the salvation of the heathen; even then he had acquired a considerable acquaintance with Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, his mind being filled with the idea of some day becoming a translator of the word of God into the language of those who sit in darkness; he had drawn out a map of the world with sheets of paper pasted together with shoemaker's wax, and the moral state of every nation depicted with his pen, before he was appointed to the unprecedented honors of being the first missionary to the heathen world, and drawing after him a train of influences that will hasten the millennium.

Omnipotence has under himself, in an important sense, committed the temporal and eternal destiny of each immortal spirit to its own keeping. Shall the

star of your destiny reach its zenith on the meridian of Nazareth, or Sodom? Shall the heavens drop down on you their dews, or shall their dews be restrained? Shall sin blight, or grace bless you? Shall the golden streams of prosperity be turned in upon you, or turned away? Shall flowers, or thorns spring up where you tread? Will you feast at heaven's fountains, and live to bless, loving God supremely and man universally, with your harp of a thousand strings ever tuned? Or will you, though angels weep and demons rejoice, bow the knee to the Baal of mammon, draw the muck-rake, live in the ends of your fingers, and clutch filth and shadows? Will you help to swell the tide of *sin*, sin which changed angels to devils, and dashed them with dishevelled robes and marred hallelujahs down to woe, caused thorns to spring up in Eden, opened everywhere the dismal grave, and enshrouded the world in gloom, filling all its bed with thistles and its pillow with thorns? Shall the multitudes rise up to bless you for your wisdom, or curse you for your folly? Will you float a worthless atom in the universe, with no proper attractions, with a thwarted destiny, and a future but dark and fearful? Or, shall religion's golden chain bind you to the throne of your Creator? And shall the heavenly gates lift up their heads and ope to your triumphant spirits their sacred portals, or shall they close and bar them forever out? These weighty problems each man under God is to solve for himself, and when will he most easily and successfully labor them, if not in the morning of life, with all the advantages of the

day upon his side? What estimate, therefore, should be put upon a child — a man in embryo, and upon the season of his youth, the germinating time of these great principles, the crisis of such vast destinies? Arithmetic with all its powers fails us, only the mathematics of eternity is adequate to such computation.

Each child is a prize that excites the ambition of contending worlds; earth and heaven are its realm, eternity its sphere, and what is there in all the honor and bliss of a terrestrial and celestial state that may not lie before a child? And what is there in all the realm of human possibility, to which he may not hopefully aspire? What, therefore, is the responsibility which rests upon each youth, upon the present generation of youth, and especially the youth of America? Permit me to say, that for you all the generations of men have lived. Upon your pathway cluster the rich fruits of the experience of all past time. For you the earth has rolled on her course, the thunder roared in the heavens, and the lightning flashed along the sky. The sun, moon, and starry host, have rolled on in sublimity, hymning the music of the spheres; the sea has dashed, and foamed, and chimed its ceaseless anthem; for you nations, kingdoms, and empires have arisen and flourished, declined and fallen; for you sages have predicted, poets have written, bards sung, and warriors bled; for you the history of nations has been but the events of Providence; the thrones of kings and of emperors have been but the stepping-stones of the Almighty on the highway of his purposes and pursuit to over-

take you; and monarchs and sovereigns have been but puppets playing his pleasure, and preparing your way.

And as all the past generations have lived for you, so *you* are to live for all that are to come. In a sense, you are responsible for the past, and for the future; you are responsible for the improvement of the light of past experience, and for directing the experience of the future. Whilst the influences of the past generation have flowed down to you, your influence will flow down to the future. Each generation has hovered over the next, acted itself into the next, and cast thus a type of character in the next, before it has come to act for itself. Upon your pathway, therefore, is concentrated, in a focal blaze, the light of six thousand years of time, and innumerable individual and national experience; you occupy the high vantage ground, which may look retrospectively and prospectively, gather up the lights and shades of the past, and improve them for the future, as the skilful pilot reads the future ocean, by the light in his stern which shines upon the past. Christ said, that the blood of all the prophets which had been shed from the foundation of the world, should be required of that generation. What will be required of this? Napoleon appealed to his soldiers amid the sublimities of the pyramids, when about to engage in fiercest conflict, saying, "Remember that the eyes of forty generations are upon you." And are not the eyes of the *universe* upon *you?* Nor does this responsibility rest on society merely, upon the four corners of the Republic, or upon the generation, but upon individuals. Each one is a thread in the great web of society; a connecting link in the chain of being; a

keystone in the arch, and is carrying onward, in his own hands, to the final consummation, an important portion of the world's influence.

There is, perhaps, no one of whom it may not be said, that there are multitudes of his fellow beings on the earth who will yearly, and till years shall end, enter the future state, whose characters are different, and will be different to all eternity, from what they would have been if he had not lived and acted, or if he had acted otherwise. The sunlight of the present and future worlds will reveal his finger-marks in their primary formations, and in all their successive strata of character and condition. And they, too, will form other characters for eternity, until the influence of his existence shall be diffused through all the future generations of this world, and through all that shall be future to a certain point in the world to come.

Says Burritt, "as the little silvery, circular ripple, set in motion by the falling pebble, expands from its inch of radius to the whole compass of the pool; so there is not a child, not an infant Moses placed, however softly, in his bulrush-ark upon the sea of time, whose existence does not stir a ripple, gyrating outward and on, until it shall have moved across and spanned the whole ocean of God's eternity, stirring even the river of life, and the fountains at which his mighty angels drink."

There is a youth now living in the United States or its territories, who will be president of this Republic in the year 1900. We venture the prediction. But where is he, and what his name, no human sagacity can now discover, and no facts in history

can indicate. And the Republic, what will be its character, its power, its limits at that no distant day? Seventy millions of people, free, intelligent, and striving with restless energy, for wealth and fame, will stretch over the continent from ocean to ocean, and it may be, from the Panama Isthmus to the frozen realms of the North. A commerce more rich and wide spread than was ever possessed by a nation before, will be protected by fleets that will insure justice and safety to all who bear the American name; while railroads and telegraphs, steam and lightning, will afford that easy and rapid communication and interchange of thought and sentiment, that assimilate the most distant communities to each other, and bind them together with the strong bonds of common interest, friendship, and freedom. In the year 1900, probably forty governors may rule over as many States. Thousands of senators and representatives will sit in the councils of the nation and the States. Hundreds of judges will administer the laws; and thousands of other posts of honor and high trust will be equally open to all endowed with ordinary ability, trained to exertion, and stimulated to a just ambition. Many of the merchant princes, wealthy agriculturists, honored mechanics, and inventors of that day, will be sons of the poor, endowed by their parents only with habits of industry, and an education that all may attain in this land of schools. The Union preserved, and prosperous as heretofore, such will be its proud position, its power and glory then.

And where is now the boy that, forty-seven years hence, is destined to sway so wide a helm? No law of hereditary succession, no royal pedigree, no divine

right to rule, can designate his home or name. No eye descries him in his present condition or foresees his destiny, but that which presides over the destinies of nations. No prince is he; no Guelph or Bourbon. He may be 'running barefooted at this moment among the huckleberry bushes of Oregon,' or over the granite hills of New England, the cotton fields of the South, or the prairies of the West. He may be sitting in some log school-house, with his feet a foot from the floor, learning his alphabet, spelling his way to the head of his class in some public school, or repeating verses to a pious Sabbath school teacher. He may be, as we write, plying his task at some printer's case, or listening to the oft told legends of a grandsire who fought for freedom with Washington, or clambering at a paternal knee and teasing for sugar plums or gingerbread: but whoever he is, and wherever he is, there is a divinity stirring within him, a responsibility lying before him; and the instructions of the Sabbath school are adequate and indispensable for his urgent necessities.

For aught we know, the destiny of this great nation may yet be committed to the hands of one of these little ones that are now in *our* hands. Possibly the action of the president may seriously affect the nation, and make the momentous decision. Possibly there is some youth near us who will throw a casting vote, which will decide an important election, and produce this effect. Possibly some little girl is destined erelong to train her offspring for this very work.

There *was* an hour in the annals of our great Revolution, when the issue of the contest was apparently

suspended, not on military skill or prowess, nor on the upshot of a battle, nor on the stability of public opinion, but on the personal integrity of three men. With three plain, unlettered men, it rested for a few minutes to say whether one of the most important military posts in the country should be preserved, or be basely and traitorously surrendered to the British army! They were men in respectable but humble life, without pretensions, without influence, without wealth, but not without the glorious purity of principle which comes from heaven. Upon this slender thread seemed to hang the whole great cause, — the honesty of two or three plain rustic militia men, perhaps of one! and yet it held the nation secure.

It is true no man knows what part he is to act upon the stage of the world, but it is equally true that every man knows that he is to act *some* part, and a *responsible* part, and with how much honor and success will depend upon his *preparation* for the work. I would therefore counsel every man, especially every young man, to aim at the *meridian*, rather than the horizon; to attempt great things and look for great results, and in order for this let the hand of celestial wisdom direct you; follow the light which is let down from the windows of heaven upon your path. Go back to the arsenal of Eden, and arm yourself with the triple brass and tenfold adamant of innocence. Make your reckoning and take your course, from the point where God placed the cradle of Adam, in the focus of spiritual light.

In France and Germany, when a traveller arrives at a strange city, or is overtaken by night, or by a storm, he takes out his compass and learns which

way is the east, or orient. Forthwith all the cardinal points — east, west, north, south — take their true places in his mind, and he is in no danger of seeking for the sunset or the pole-star in the wrong quarter of the heavens. He is said to *orient himself.*

When commanders of armies approach each other for the battle, on which the fate of empires may depend, each learns the localities of the ground, — how best he can intrench his front or cover his flank, how best he can make a sally or repel an assault. *He orients himself.*

When a statesman revolves some mighty scheme of administrative policy, so vast as to comprehend surrounding nations, and later times in its ample scope, he takes an inventory of his resources, he adapts means to ends, he adjusts plans and movements so that one shall not counterwork another, and he marshals the whole series of affairs for producing the grand result. *He orients himself.* I would say to you also, *orient* yourselves, awaken and open your eyes upon a world of duties, dangers, designs, privileges, responsibilities. ORIENT yourselves. Seek your element, repair to your institution. Step into the triumphant ranks of the Sabbath school; put on its armor, lift your eye to its goal, and act amid its functions; *grace* your own God-given instrumentality, and help with this lever to roll the earth into heaven's sunbeams.

Look at the martyrs of truth in all ages, and from their ascending chariots of fire catch their flaming mantles. Seek each an education commensurate with your privileges and responsibilities, and then go forth and act worthy of that education.

"Act, act in the living present,
Heart within and God o'erhead."

"Up! work out the fate of heroes,
Or perish at least in the strife;
Even you may be builders of bridges
For the passage of souls into life!

"As the wave of existence is drifting
And rushing to darkness and death,
Seek to hew with the sword of the spirit
White blocks from the deep mine of faith."

And if you cannot move the whole world, seek to move a part, even if but a segment of the circle. If you cannot, like Luther and Raikes, move the religious world, seek to move the intellectual, scientific, commercial, or mechanical world; and if you cannot, like some we have mentioned, move these departments entire, if you cannot give an impulse to the cause of literature and science, and to the work of renovating the civil institutions of the world, if you cannot, like Phidias, command marble forms to walk breathing forth from the quarries, or like Franklin make thunder sweet music, and the lightning innocent fireworks, or like Galileo invent a telescope by which earth looks into heaven, — if you cannot, like Fulton and Morse, discover the powers of steam and electricity, and subject to human control these mighty agents, one of which makes the earth all tongue to speak, and ear to hear, and the other all feet to run and wings to fly, — if you cannot chain the lightnings of heaven and yoke the elements to the car of transportation for the body and mind, while the speed of the former outvies the eagle in his flight, and the latter makes wire its pathway and lightning its char-

iot, — if you cannot move the nations, bringing them into near proximity and mutual embrace, — if you cannot, like the Pilgrims, plant a colony, or like the patriot fathers declare a nation's independence, and pledge your lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to maintain it, if you cannot be stars of magnitude culminating in the national meridian, or shining in the galaxy of genius, — if you cannot write your names on the elements of nature, or the institutions of art and science, or upon the greatest of deeds — if you cannot claim the paternity of great principles, inventions, and discoveries, — though you cannot Samson-like, with one mighty effort overthrow the temple of wickedness, turn back the tide of sin, and bring a whole kingdom at the feet of the Redeemer at once, — though you cannot do these wonders, you can still do *something*, and that something is the very object which moved Omnipotence to create you. And if your mission be no more, seek to move your own *heart;* seek to be

> The greatest hero of the whole,
> The hero who doth *himself* control.

Endeavor to carry up before the throne of the Eternal, and lay at his feet the offering of an immortal spirit, redeemed and sanctified through the means and power of grace, and your achievement will be sublimer than all the researches, inventions, and discoveries of genius, learning, and art; your honor greater than the taking of a city, the discovery of a continent, or the mastering of the elements; and your reward richer than ever was purchased by a nation's wealth, won by her valor, or bestowed by her benevo-

lence. For in securing salvation, you will kindle a beacon light in the world, you will quicken the pulses of all heaven, awaken ten thousand melodies and add new charms to every harp in bliss. You will be prepared to bear up with you through the temple gates all the trophies that lie within the compass of possibility, and shine with ever increasing effulgence in the firmament of heaven, when all the lights of time have become extinguished.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MINISTER AND THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

MINISTERS, you are the especial favorites of heaven; you hath he called with a peculiar calling, and assigned a peculiar work; upon you hath descended the mantle of the Great Instructor; your hearts and lips hath he strangely warmed with the live coals of his altar; the paternal hand of heaven hath rested upon your brow, and his gracious words descended into your hearts. Your position is between the living and the dead, your power is with man and with God; your work is a mediation between the offended Creator and his offending creatures; you are a golden channel through which flow heaven's blessings to man; to you is committed the blowing of the trumpet in Zion; you are to "warn every man — for all are in danger, and teach every man in all wisdom — for all are totally ignorant, — that you may present every man perfect before God," for all have departed from him and gone to ruin. "Thou shalt hear the words at my mouth and warn the people from me;" your commission extends to all the world, to every creature. You are to be to universal man, like clouds full of rain to the parched earth, — golden vessels in the hand of the Lord to refresh the fam-

ishing people, — welcome visitants in the domestic circle, and shining lights in the divine sanctuary; you are the veins and arteries of the body politic which are to conduct to and fro, and diffuse all abroad the knowledge, life, and salvation of God. To you emphatically applies the earnest and thrice repeated command of the Great Teacher, "feed my sheep," "feed my lambs."

—— "The pulpit
Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,
The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament of virtue's cause."

The momentous influence of the ministry in the moral world is like the general law of gravitation in the natural, linking worlds to worlds, systems to systems, holding suns and planets in their appropriate spheres and orbits, causing all to tend to one common centre, and be subservient to the general law of order; and this centre to which the ministry of Christ tends to bring every moral and every natural element, every mind and every body, is the throne of God. Being instituted by the Great Head of the church, we might expect its influence to be thus extensive. As in the human body he has made the aorta the one grand artery, the vehicle of the vital fluid which so ramifies and divides as to meet the exigencies of every part, even the minutest fibre; so God has ordained that clerical influence shall be felt and realized in every scene of domestic sorrow and joy, and in every movement of intellectual and moral advancement throughout all society, — like the sunlight and the atmosphere, pervading and filling

the world. Ministers are the vicegerents of God, set for the "defence of the gospel," and for the gathering in of the "lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and

> "As the bird each fond endearment tries,
> To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,"

so they are

> "To try each art, reprove each dull delay,
> Allure to brighter worlds, and lead the way;"

calling into requisition the confidence, respect, esteem, and coöperation of all the people.

And, my brethren, how can we best secure these great and desirable results? What commanding position shall we occupy? Where shall we place the lever of our influence so as most effectually to move society? Let us take our position among the children. Let us place ourselves at this most vulnerable, most susceptible, most interesting and accessible point of human society. Here is the radiating point of the world, of each locality, and of all society,—the point of danger, of susceptibility, of decision, of hope, of universal divergence. Efforts made and influences imparted here, therefore, at the *source* of society, will make the deepest, most effectual, and extensive impression. This is the fulcrum which Archimedes wanted that he might move the world. The "children of the present," have been denominated the "men of the future generations, and the immortals of eternity." True it is that children are the principal materials with which the world of usefulness, and the heaven of bliss are to be replenished. And whilst the ministers of Christ are to sow beside all waters, withholding their hands never, they are

particularly required to sow their seed "in the morning," and to sow most liberally in such soil as is the quickest, surest, and most prolific. And where does all experience prove this to be, if not in the Eden garden of childhood, amid the sunshine, showers, and smiles of that "institution which takes care of the children?" There is an especial and repeated command from the Great Head of the church, to all his under shepherds, whilst they lead their flocks into the green pastures of truth, and beside the still waters of peace and love, to feed the *lambs*, and carry them in their bosom. And do we not find that parishes and religious societies thrive or decline in proportion to the life and success of their Sabbath school? And are not all clergymen hence admonished that their peculiar labors will be prosperous or fruitless, according to the extent of their interest in, and encouragement of, the Sabbath school connected with their respective congregations? A minister at this day must be a Sabbath school man. The question, therefore, of this institution is not one of expediency, but of absolute necessity, — a question of life or death to the church and ministry. What Christian family moving into a place, would attaeh itself to a church without a school? What Christian church would call a pastor who is opposed to this institution? And what church would fully and successfully discharge its great obligations without this instrumentality? A bishop recently took for his motto in one of our chief cities, "No Sabbath school, no church." It is certainly safe to say, a careless and weak Sabbath school, ditto the church.

The adverse circumstances and influences of the

present day, have become so powerful that the Sabbath school is absolutely needed to keep the children in the bosom of the church. And yet, says Mr. James, it is a matter of great surprise and equal regret, that many ministers appear to take little or no interest in the concerns of the Sunday schools supported by their congregations. They are scarcely ever to be seen among the children, or affording their presence and instruction at the meetings of the teachers. The annual sermon which they preach for the benefit of the institution, seems to be regarded by them as a legal discharge from all further obligation to interfere on its behalf; and till they set down to compose their sermon for the next anniversary, it is neglected and forgotten. To what can such an omission be attributed? They can scarcely imagine that a school containing two, three, or four hundred immortal souls, is an object below their notice, or beyond their duty; nor will they shelter themselves under the excuse that when they undertook the charge of the congregation, they did not stipulate to concern themselves about the school. Does it comport with that zeal and piety by which they profess to be moved, to hear of so many immortal souls assembled every week within the sphere of their labors, for religious instruction, and yet scarcely ever inquire how they are going on? Do not such ministers strangely neglect the means of increasing their own personal influence, who suffer so important an institution to be in constant operation amidst their people, and yet have little or no share in directing its movements? Is it not teaching their congregations to act independently of their pastors, and to diminish

the weight of their office, already, in the estimation of many, far too light? Do they consult the interests of the church by neglecting those of the Sunday school? If a proper share of attention were given to those youths, in all probability its happy result would often prove a balm to heal the wounds occasioned by want of ministerial success. Here they would find materials to build up their dilapidated churches, and strengthen the walls of Zion, which have been mouldering beneath the desolating ravages of death. This duty would add little to the number or the weight of his engagements, while it would add much to his influence, his usefulness, and his comfort.

Says Dr. Cooley, "Success in the ministry is much diminished by neglect of the rising generation. As many as one half of our parishioners are under the age of sixteen years, and one third, according to my bills for forty-eight years, die under ten. The young are the hope of the church. The first years of life are the most important. The Holy Spirit strives with children and youth. Is it not, therefore, most inexcusable and sinful to neglect this portion of the flock, till their disease becomes inveterate, and their cure comparatively hopeless? Shall the enemy be suffered to keep his palace in peace, and strengthen his interest unmolested? For the evil here brought to view, the influence and efforts of the pastor will administer a salutary remedy. We must strive to awaken Christian parents to the tenderest concern for the conversion and salvation of their children. Let pious mothers be advised to take their children to the closet, for counsel and prayer, with direct refer-

ence to their early conversion to God. Let parents be instructed into the nature and spiritual importance of infant baptism, and advised to bring their children early and believingly to the sacramental seal. Let us not, through delicacy, neglect this subject, because many whom we fellowship as Christians, neglect and deny this ordinance. It has been my privilege to witness a number of happy, triumphant deaths among children between the age of six and thirteen years; and it is a remarkable fact, that they were *all baptized children.*

We must extend our influence to Sabbath schools and Bible classes; and while we enlist as many as possible, both as teachers and pupils, let us give earnest attention to these nurseries of religious instruction. Let every child that can read be furnished with a Bible, and persuaded to read it seriously and daily. Children that are Bible readers, generally, sooner or later, become converted. Our discourses from the pulpit are prepared not for children, but for men of matured intellects. These are fed with the best fruits of our labors, while the lambs of the flock are too often suffered to perish with hunger. This is not acting the part of a faithful and wise steward, who gives to every one of the household a portion of meat in due season.

It was a saying of Richard Baxter, that by a faithful and suitable use of means, the greatest part would be converted before they could understand a sermon. Well may we inquire, with much solicitude, Have we not failed of obeying fully the command of the Saviour to his favorite apostle, "Feed my lambs?" Rather let us obey his solemn injunc-

tion, and imitate his worthy example. Let us be teachers of babes, childlike in the treatment of children, and drop the truth into narrow-mouthed understandings, that we may thereupon engraft exhortations which will draw the catechumens into declared resolutions of piety.

Let us recognize the Sabbath school as the right arm of our influence, — the mightiest moral engine that has been set in operation for ages for the extension and perfection of our work; affording to the faithful pastor greater facilities for the instruction of his people than any thing before discovered. And let us improve faithfully this instrumentality, — inviting our brethren, on occasions of exchanges, to address our schools; appearing there often in person for exhortation, inspection, and advice, that we may fan the kindling sparks, and feed the sacred flame; preaching often to the Sabbath school, to the teachers, parents, scholars, and officers, and watching with the greatest solicitude and hope over these candidates for the coming ministry and church, thus keeping alive this sacrificial fire upon her altar. Let the great public mind be moved, and continue to be moved by conversation, by prayer, by exhortation, and actual, self-denying, hard labor.

When politicians wish to carry a favorite measure, they keep it before the people; they write for the press; they address the people; they repeat and reiterate their assertions till they are so inwrought into the very texture of men's minds, that they mistake them for their own, and proceed to the execution of the plans of others with the same enthusiasm as if they had been the originators of

them. So will it be with the subject of Sabbath school instruction, when the best thoughts of pastors shall, with the religious journals, become familiar guests at the firesides of the people, when their living voices shall plead this cause in the public sanctuary where men worship, by the private hearthstone where they live, and altars where they pray. One of the peculiar excellences of the Christian ministry is, its adaptation to human capacity; he is to become "all things to all men;" — as a child to children, for the sublime and exalted purpose of their instruction and salvation. Let us be trees of righteousness, whose bending boughs the children can reach, and upon whose golden fruitage they may live. I would rather be an apostle to the children than an "apostle to the Gentiles."

I would look with Argus's hundred eyes, work with Briareus' hundred hands, and speak with Cottus's hundred tongues; speaking in this ear-trumpet of the world, controlling here its issues, and sweeping this its harp, mightier far shall be my mission, and sublimer my achievements. I would rather, while I live, have the title conferred by the London Bible Society, — "Robert Raikes, Esq., the founder of Sunday Schools," than to have the fame of Alexander the Great, who conquered the Old World, of Columbus who found the New, or of Sir Isaac Newton who discovered the laws by which all worlds consist. I would rather rest at last beneath a plank, with the simple inscription, "This man loved little children, and labored for their salvation," than to have the epitaph of a king, and sleep beneath the marble of the Cæsars.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE Church, — you are honored with being the body, whose head is Christ; you are the "bride, the Lamb's wife," the purchase of the great Redeemer's blood; you hath he loved with an everlasting love, and chosen before the foundation of the world; thou art graven upon the palms of his hands, and thy walls are ever before him. You hath he made the great receptacle of truth and light, the conservator of the nations; the salt of the earth, the light of the world. "The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion." With you hath the Most High made his dwelling-place in all generations; for you hath he made the world, and governed it, and directed all his providences; with you is his covenant established; for you hath light been emitted and truth developed, as the eye has dilated and the mind expanded to receive it. To you is committed the responsibility, under God, of preserving, extending, and perfecting the Redeemer's kingdom upon the earth, by taking up the varied instrumentalities as they are given, and improving them for his glory, — privileges and honors which angels might covet. You are to be a type of heaven; a perpetual Christ in the earth; an embodied de-

velopment of the attributes and perfections of the Deity; a visible manifestation of the fruits of the divine Spirit; an exhibition of the consistency of rectitude, the beauty of holiness, the bliss of benevolence, and the omnipotence of truth. Individually and collectively, you are to be "living epistles, known and read of all men."

The church of God has a scope of intention, and instruments and powers adequate to this; it descends upon the world to claim all souls for its ultimate dominion. With its pillars fixed upon the deep foundations of eternal truth, it lifts its lofty dome far above the highest pinnacle of the universe, and with its capacious arms invites and attracts to its embrace, all, from the Infinite Divine, lessening down to the most finite human. Its destined triumphs are from "sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth," in gradual but sure and absolute triumph over the dominions of the "world, the flesh, and the devil." And as, in ascending the Alps, the traveller reaches a summit, and then descends into a vale from which he emerges and gains a higher elevation, but is doomed to descend again into impenetrable depths, and toil up again to a still loftier mount, till at last he stands above the clouds, and converses with the heavens; so has been the church in her upward progress. As each succeeding mount of the Alpine ridges was higher than the last, and as each valley was higher than the preceding one, till the last vale was further up the heavens than the first summit; so it has been with the church of God in her advancement and moral manifestations; its apparent ascents and descents have

contributed alike to her real progress. She first stood upon Mount Ararat, then upon Mount Sinai, then upon Calvary, and is now "flowing unto the mountain of the Lord's house, which is established above the hills," drawing earth triumphantly upward to the embrace of heaven; her power is the omnipotence of truth; her victory the triumph of truth and righteousness. Men die; not half of them reach the meridian of life, and only here and there a straggler is seen at the opposite side of the stage, creeping down upon the knees of second childhood to find his longed for rest. The great masters of philosophy and champions of infidelity die, by turns, into glimmer and darkness; but Christ, the Messiah, the great "head of the church," is the Sun of Righteousness, rolling up into noon and the fulness of day. Systems decay, institutions fail, time rots the pyramids, cities and nations disappear from the face of the earth, the world grows gray with years; but "he who keepeth Israel" is no older to-day than he was yesterday, and will be no older a thousand years hence than he is to-day; his eye, undimmed, looks upon the desolations of time, and eternity adds not to the length of his years; and such is his peculiar care for, and delight in his church, that he has ever made the "blood of the martyrs the seed of the church," and pressed into her service all the providences of the world, and the impulses of heaven, to urge her onward in her career, till she shall break in pieces all other kingdoms, fill the whole earth with his glory, and stand forever.

And when you consider that for the last twenty-five years, nine tenths of all the trophies of Chris-

tianity have been won by the valor of the Sabbath school, and have entered through its sacred portals to the embrace of the church, that the church herself has been greatly quickened, and Christianity received a fresh impulse; that a thousand new influences have been awakened which are pervading and perfecting society, exploring and renovating the realms of darkness, lifting the shrouds from the earth, prophetic of a glorious millennial day; when you consider that God has most signally and invariably smiled upon this institution, must you not feel that you have manifestly arrived at a crisis when duty the most urgent calls to new measures and new efforts? That there is peculiar emphasis in the command, "Arise and shine for thy light is come?" And may not the church turn her eye fully upon the youth, and consider the Sabbath school as the chief instrumentality in her hand for the accomplishment of her sublime purposes? That it is, as it has been denominated, the right arm itself of the church,—a part of her very being, the bulwark of free institutions and civil liberties? And if it is in any sense a part of the church, why should not her vital power attach to it, and her lifeblood flow through its veins? If it is the right arm of the church, why should she not stretch it forth to the rescue of the perishing millions within her grasp? If it is the bulwark of the nation, why should not the nation trust to it more than to fleets and armies, enterprise, mere intellectual science, or any of the powers of her strength?

It is a momentous consideration, that there are thousands and millions of neglected children, scattered through all the extent of Zion and surrounding

her upon every hand, who are looking to her for the formation of their minds and hearts, for the bread of life and salvation of their souls; who are lifting up their tender hands and ceaseless cries for her blessing. Along the highways, by-ways, and hedges of the country, and in the streets, lanes, and alleys in our cities and populous towns, upon the wharves, the waters, and the fields we find them, daily exposed to the depraving influence of the pleasure-seeker, Sabbath-breaker, the swearer, the liar, the drinker, the thief, the libertine, the scoffer, — American born and emigrant children in a state of utter neglect, — orphans of the worst kind of orphanage, that which is spiritual. And here are to be witnessed, on the Sabbath, in perhaps a less aggravated form, the same scenes that first sickened and then inspired the heart of Robert Raikes.

If there is an object of real pity in the wide world, it is a little child making its way unguarded and uncounselled up into the busy haunts of men, with a skin as fair and delicate as a palace child, yet all begrimmed with dirt, — affections susceptible of the gentlest influences, yet all rudely stifled, — a temper pliable, yet goaded into obstinacy and violence, — a mind capable of exalted attainments assimilating it to its Creator, yet left to rust and perish in brutish ignorance. Dr. Bell thus describes the progress of one such. "But alas," he says, "it is the history of a frightful class in the population of the towns, and half the inmates of the ragged schools of the old world."

"The little creature has an expression that does not belong to infancy. It looks sad and careworn.

If it survive, it early creeps out into the street, there to begin a life that will probably end where it began. It learns to speak, — but what is the language? It sees and hears, — but what does it see and hear? The reader knows. Such is its infantine education, — an education that is unmixed, untinged even by the words of a good vocabulary. It does not know the meaning of *lie*, because it has never been taught, the meaning of *truth;* nay, it has been taught to lie, and truth has been sedulously concealed from its mind. Anon, it is instructed in the art of pilfering, and in hellish rhetoric of the wynds. When he is four or five years of age, he attracts the attention of the police-man, who 'marks him as his own;' and he appears before the magistrate — an experienced thief — at the mature age of six years. How much this urchin knows! He knows all the obscene words, and all the oaths, simple and compound, which are the pith and marrow of the language in the wynds. He knows all the highways and by-ways, — the outs and the ins, — the nooks and the crannies of the city. He knows the value of things. He knows the most approved method of appropriating what belongs to another. He is acquainted with the 'wee pawn' broker; and he knows the dram-seller, for whose sake he is an outcast. We say that this boy as little deserves to be condemned for traversing the law, as the red deer deserves to be slain for crossing the march upon the snow clad hill, descending into the valley, and satisfying his appetite on the turnips of an upland farmer."

"The sagacious reformer of society, who would do his work thoroughly, must go where children are,

and analyze the atmosphere they breathe, the food they eat, the water they drink, and all the physical and moral elements in the midst of which they live, and move, and have their being. There are many men and women — more this year than there were last — who are doing this. They are making their way up into the high and sickly garrets, and down into the dark and loathsome cellars, where they handle poverty and its gaunt companions as things of life. And what do they tell us of the sights they see there, and of the influences under which the 'sunny years of prattling childhood,' as we call them, are passed in the homes of the abject poor?"

"Alas," as one says, "the children of the very poor never prattle. It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. 'Poor people,' said a sensible old nurse, 'do not bring up their children; they drag them up.' The little careless darling of the wealthier nursery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humor it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cry, it can only be beaten. It never had a toy, nor knew what a carol meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses, it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty; the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child, the prattle nonsense, (best sense to it,) the wise impertinences, the apt story interposed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passions of young wonder. It was never sung to;

no one ever told it a tale of the nursery." "It had no young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A child exists not for the very poor as an object of dalliance; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labor. It is the rival, till it can be the coöperator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his diversion, his solace: it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have no young times. It makes the very heart bleed to overhear the casual street talk between a poor woman and her little girl, — a woman of the better sort of poor. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays. It is of mangling, and clear starching, of the price of coal, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, — before it was a child. It has learned to go to market; it haggles, it envies, it murmurs; it is knowing, acute, sharpened, — it never prattles."

Such outlines force upon us the inquiry, What will be the men and women, if such is their childhood? And does it not suggest, too, the great idea, that any process which is employed to avert or correct social evils, that does not expend its force mainly on childhood, must be very partial and temporary in its effects? These children must be withdrawn. They must be washed and tidily dressed, by some kind Christian visitor's interposition. They must be led out of that scene of degradation and squalor, and their names must be enrolled upon the Sunday

school register, and then they may become missionaries to bear home little lights from the Sunday school into the dwelling, and open up in the worst and lowest groups, for themselves and their parents, brighter visions and better hopes.

There are said to be six millions of neglected children in our country, growing up many of them unchecked in vice and unreproved in profligacy. In one section of Illinois only eight thousand out of sixty-five thousand of the children are in Sunday schools. Similar facts exist in various parts of the country. These children are in a course of training under the direction of the adversary of souls, for deeds of reckless daring, for acts of startling iniquity, for a residence in prison, and for endless ruin.

These youth are in a state of transition from childhood to maturity; and in the democratic equality of our republic, they are soon to be members, in one sense, of the government of our country. They will enjoy an equal right with the purest in the appointing of our executive officers, and in influencing the destinies of the nation. Of how much importance is it, then, that these minds and hearts be properly trained!

Said a public speaker recently, "There is not an untutored boy or girl on American soil, and speaking the English tongue, that can remain untutored without exposing to just reproach the State, and all the good and wise men in it."

These neglected children have many of them high natural endowments, that only require cultivation to become of immense value to the church. Among them are many who might become members and

officers of the church of Christ; the managers of her charities, the occupants of her pulpits, and the laborers in her missionary fields; — vicious, ragged, and ungovernable though they may be at first, the gospel is the power of God even unto the salvation of such. Their uncultivated hearts afford hopeful ground in which to cast the heavenly seed; and often the earliest and most promising harvests are reaped in this unpromising portion of the Master's vineyard.

In the most forbidding localities, and among the most uncouth rubbish of society, are to be found gems, which, by polishing, will be fit for a Saviour's crown, and glitter among the treasures of heaven. The eye of faith discerns these hidden treasures. And it is the exalted mission of the Sabbath school, to explore and shed its benign influences in city, town, hamlet, and district of wide spread country; through all the ramifications and dependencies of society, and all the channels of public and domestic intercourse; to sow thickly the seeds of truth by the hearthstones of error; to gently remove what is crushing the tender sympathies of infant souls, and let in upon the susceptible nature of childhood a beam of sunlight, and a breath of vital air. Many hundreds in our chief cities have been plucked by this meek and merciful agency from the blight of despair; and but for the slowness of our faith and the weakness of our hands, these hundreds might have been thousands, and these thousands myriads.

The absence of opposing obstacles, and the proverbial susceptibility of infancy and childhood, invite us to seize that golden opportunity to fill the mind with truth, and fortify it against all the ordinary

forms of aggressive error. The minds of all classes of children lie open alike to the inculcation of truth or error; and, other things being equal, the most active, sagacious, and watchful parties will secure the eminent advantage of *preoccupation.*

The haymaker works while the sun shines; the smith strikes while the iron is hot; the mariner spreads his sails and catches the gale while it is passing; the moulder shapes the clay ere it hardens in his hands. Children, whose feet at eight and ten are unused to the path of duty, will be turned into it with great difficulty years afterwards. Now the opportunity is all open and inviting, to win them to the paths of knowledge and truth; then they are captives, led by Satan at his will; and we must leave them to the exhortations of the prison chaplain, and the occasional sympathy of an official visitor to their cells.

CHAPTER XX.

THE UNFAITHFULNESS OF THE CHURCH.

THERE is, no doubt, superfluous wealth enough and idle hands enough in the American church, to evangelize her entire domain. There are doubtless idlers, cumberers of the ground, and buried talents sufficient in every city, town, and village, if they had but the spirit of the apostles, to present a Bible to every child and every adult in their respective localities; to penetrate every garret and cellar, every street, lane, and alley, every highway and by-way, to carry the written word of salvation and the oral word of instruction to every son and daughter of squalid poverty, neglected ignorance, and degraded vice. Still there is a great want of men and means, that overwhelming duties are almost crushing the few who are striving to bear the ark of the Lord. There is a want of means; treasuries are everywhere exhausted or poorly supplied, strange to tell, when the official valuation of the products of the soil, the manufactures, and the commerce of the country amount annually to millions of dollars, and far more than half of this money is in the hands of the friends of religion and of religious institutions. Yes, and the sums worse than thrown away, for worldly amusements, costly apparel, gaudy palaces, and sumptuous

living, many, many times exceed the aggregate charities of the nation. There are those in the Christian church who pay more annually for cigars and the noxious weed, than they contribute to benevolent objects. There are many more who expend a larger sum in a single pleasure excursion, than they give in three or even five years to the poor and perishing.

"It is said, that the entire contribution of the churches connected with the American Foreign Missionary Society amounts to no more than *one fourth of a cent* daily for each member. What a mere pittance in contrast with the wealth in the possession of professing Christians! ONE FOURTH OF A CENT DAILY! far less than the amount *wasted* in the religious families of the land. From the superfluities of Christian people might be spared a sum vastly greater than this, without diminishing their enjoyments, or being accounted in any sense a loss. What a vindication of the charge we bring against the church of Christ! What a stain upon the Christian name! What a caricature upon the Christian profession, that all our wealth belongs to Christ! The superscription which we profess to stamp upon every coin is Christ's, and still we use them as if they bore the image and superscription of Cæsar. *Self* is the idol before which many of the Lord's followers bow with their costliest offerings. Self is Dives in the mansion, clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day. The cause of Christ is Lazarus, lying at his gate, and fed only with the crumbs which fall from his table.

"A greater sin does not mar the reputation of the church at the present day than that of *penurious giv-*

ing. The car of salvation is impeded by the covetous spirit that prevails, more than by the downright opposition of the heathen world, or from the abounding hostility among the enemies of God. The prayers of many are a standing rebuke to their benevolence, or rather to the want of it. GET TO GIVE! This should be the motto of the Christian church, to contrast nobly with that of the selfish world, GET TO HOARD! God is to be glorified with her alms as really as with her prayers."

The stupendous strides in wealth which the people of this country, and Christian people, have made within the last quarter of a century, are beyond the bounds of comprehension; and the development of our boundless resources, and the expanding schemes for acquisition in all the great branches of industry, in another quarter of a century, with the continued smiles of Providence, will make this the richest nation on the globe. Our coal-mines, and gold-mines, and mountains of iron, and wheat fields, and cotton plantations, and spindles, and ships, will roll in upon their owners wealth more than enough for all their wants, should they bestow millions where thousands are now contributed, to enlighten and save the country and the world. There is enough money in the hands of Christians in this land, to make the reader of the Bible tremble, lest the curse of Meroz shall fall upon them; and to shut up the outlets through which this wealth should flow forth in blessings for a perishing world, or seek to turn it all on a little patch of ground, would be like damming a living fountain, and making it a stagnant pool, creamed over with the scum of indolence, and

infested with the reptiles of selfishness, instead of directing it where its waters might irrigate the parched earth, and bear spiritual health and refreshment to famishing souls.

"Few realize that God requires giving for their own good. It is said of a traveller upon the Alps, that, while chilled wellnigh to freezing by the excessive cold, his companion sunk down in the snow by his side, unable longer to resist the keenness of the winter's blast. At once he began to rub his limbs and body, in order to restore their warmth and save the exhausted man from death, and the effort of resuscitating his fallen companion brought back the heat to his own system; so that, while he restored his associate, he saved his own life." Thus it is with benevolence; it blesses twice, — it blesses him who receives, and him who gives. And God requires the gift for the giver's sake.

One half of the world is without the Bible, and never heard the names of God, or Christ, or heaven; two thirds are without religious institutions, and millions even in our own land, and tens of thousands in the church, are without the rudiments of a common education, and destitute of the necessaries of life. There are vast valleys of dry bones, over which the voice of holy prophecy never breathed. Not fewer than twenty thousand missionaries would be required, to give to every thirty thousand persons *one* missionary, and this would cost, annually, but five millions of pounds, — a sum which, in this country alone, might be contributed without any painful sacrifice. Yet in England alone, the duty paid on malt and hops, for brewing, would more than supply

the wants of twenty thousand missionaries; and the amount expended in London, in 1837, on spirits, tobacco, and snuff (articles certainly not among the *necessaries of life*), would have supported a similar number, and left a surplus of nearly one hundred and fifty-three thousand pounds.

The expenses of two hundred thousand missionaries might be met by the sum spent in distilled and fermented liquors throughout Great Britain and Ireland. The *duty* paid, in England, on spirits, malt and hops, wine, tobacco and snuff, horses, carriages, and dogs, is from twenty to twenty-five *millions* of pounds annually; while all her great religious societies for the conversion of the world, receive far less than one million. Similar facts exist in this country. Twelve millions of dollars are paid out annually to keep our criminals, and thirty-five millions to support American lawyers, while only six millions of dollars are spent annually to sustain ministers in the United States! Hotels, warehouses, and mansions lift their fronts far above our churches, and overshadow their spires. It has been said that a single Roman Catholic church, St. Peters in Rome, cost more than all the churches in the United States.

Many professed Christians are living in houses of "cedar, while the ark of God dwelleth in curtains." The unfaithfulness of Christians is also seen in the amazing and frightful disproportion of their labors and sacrifices for the cultivation of different portions of the Lord's vineyard. I saw a statement recently, showing that the ministers of a certain evangelical sect amount, in the United States, to one for every one thousand four hundred and twenty-six inhabi-

tants; while elsewhere over the earth, the same church has one minister to about forty one million inhabitants; a proportion of thirty thousand, to one. And in many of our New England towns and villages, there are three, five, and seven evangelical churches, and as many ministers, where far less than half the number would suffice; and church-members are so multiplied as to trench upon each other, or leave but an extremely narrow sphere of Christian labors, so that their time and substance is chiefly devoted to the world; and we have here stores of Bibles sufficient to freight ships and rail-cars, while the West — the great West — is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and her cry is for Bibles, for missionaries, for books, and for churches; and the nations of the world are bowing in idolatrous worship, and thronging the gates of death, whilst the command is incessantly ringing in every ear, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Says one, "The church is almost utterly absorbed in behalf of three or four millions of illuminated ones, and almost utterly forgetful of five or six hundred millions of blind idolaters. She is keeping ten thousand laborers among a few enlightened people, and scarcely beyond a score of laborers among hundreds of millions that are sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. She is, this hour, doing work hundreds of times *less*, for the benefit of masses hundreds of times *more*, and hundreds of times more needy. She is operating on the world by a law marvellously curious and strange, — by a sort of inverse ratio; as if the suggestion of propriety, and

the command of God were, that by as much as there is more to be done in a given locality of the Lord's vineyard, by so much the less labor shall be there bestowed." Why this marvellous disproportion of labor in the Lord's vineyard?

If the church believe that all men have sinned, and are exposed to death, — that Christ died for all, and left it in solemn charge to his church to proclaim these tidings universally, — why is so much salt packed up and stored away rather than diffused abroad? Why so much light hid under a bushel, or made to career only in its native sphere? Why are there so many, the waters of whose souls are green with stagnation, their breath pestiferous with unwholesome diet, their pulse sluggish, and their limbs powerless with inaction — whilst their coffers are sealed and rusted together — whose providences, so far from opening their hearts and awakening them from their drowsy dreams, only stupefy them?

Many of these professing Christians have been "exalted to heaven" with privileges. They have enjoyed five, eight, and ten years of pure Sabbaths; and within these years of Sabbaths, fifteen, twenty or twenty-five thousand days; and every day has offered them *heaven* and heaven's instrumentalities and aid. They have heard thousands of sermons, exhortations, chapters, prayers, songs of praise; they have had thousands of providences, warnings, judgments, blessings, convictions, and impressions, and they are hastening up to the judgment with this fearful account, — "but they have made sepulchres of their heads and hearts, in which to bury God's precious gifts, that nothing but a resurrection can

rend the bolts and bars, and bring forth the dead things from their burial-places to the light of day."

Christ speaks to them amid the dying agonies of the cross, "Lovest thou me?" And they nod assent, but refuse to feed either his sheep or his lambs. Their prayers are a standing rebuke to their covetousness. Such professors are a libel upon Christianity; a living slander and reproach; a practical denial of every promise of Scripture.

This may seem like severe language, but there are too many in the Christian church to whom it is applicable. On the finding of a dead body in any part of our land, the law has appointed an officer, whose duty it is to summon a jury, and institute an inquiry into the circumstances of the fact. Parties found to be in any way accessory to such a death, are to be placed upon their trial before a competent tribunal. Every lost soul will become the subject of a still more solemn inquest; and, should it be found that the sad event has happened through the neglect of the parties appointed to instruct and guide him, they will be declared guilty of his death, his blood will be required at their hand; for they saw the sword coming and gave not warning.

There is a day of reckoning coming for the church as well as for the world, whose impartial voice will say, "inasmuch as ye did it, come ye blessed," and "inasmuch as ye did it not, depart ye cursed."

The work which is assigned to the church is indispensable. The present generations of heathen are looking to the present generations of Christians to send them the means and blessings of salvation. And the myriads of neglected, erring, perishing

souls, even in our own land, must be enlightened, reformed, and sanctified. If the church neglect this responsible work, who shall perform it? Shall it be intrusted to the world? The careless, prayerless, unbelieving world? Will the agricultural world attend to it? Or the commercial, mercantile, or political? These, if they do not ridicule or oppose, have bought oxen and land, married wives, and ask with one consent to be excused. The world will care for its own, and who but the spiritual will care for the things of the spiritual?

So it was in primitive days, when the disciples went everywhere preaching the word, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." The migratory habits of our people have carried the members of our several churches into every nook and corner of our country. Had they but the spirit of apostolic times, then, like those of the dispersion that followed the stoning of Stephen, they also would go everywhere preaching the word. We need "captains of fifties and captains of hundreds," as in olden times; "practical men and practical truth, and practical measures for applying and diffusing the truth, are the paramount want of a practical age."

The operations of the church are multifarious and weighty, and lean with crushing force upon the few, when by a more equal distribution they might be made comparatively light and easy. There should be no consumers who are not also producers; no obstructives or destructives in the church; but all should be instructives and constructives; every male

should be a benefactor, and every female a benefactress. "Every plant of the Father's planting should give out a portion of the fragrance and fruitfulness which it has drawn from the soil of the covenant. We shall then see the true power of the church, as a reformer of evil, develop itself, when not a segment, but the whole orb shall display its illumined face to the world." "Then will the tree of the Lord flourish at the last, when every little tendril of the root, hidden in its fitting place in the soil, is perpetually drawing up nutriment for the trunk and boughs. Then will the church be strong and fruitful, when every closet is a hidden duct, conveying always spiritual nutriment to the system." Not a part, but the whole, should constitute the teaching church.

One million of Christians cannot discharge the duties of two millions, nor two of ten; we cannot expect the millennium of light and knowledge until each member of the entire church shall begin to teach his brother and neighbor, saying, "Know ye the Lord." One has said if every man would sweep before his own door, London would be clean in half an hour. So if every man would give his heart to God, the world might turn her eye towards the rising sun of the millennial morn. But until that time, every parent must teach his children, every friend his friend, every neighbor his neighbor, every minister his flock, and every one who has the favorable opportunity and requisite gifts, should lend them to the Lord. The church as formed by God must be a perfect organization so far as relates to parts; there can be nothing superfluous, nothing lacking;

nor has she a soul or a talent which is not requisite for the accomplishment of her sublime purpose; as every member of the body is requisite for healthy and efficient life. And while no one is called to "labor in vain, or to run in vain," neither is any one called into the church of God in vain; not a drop of grace ever fell from the heavens of mercy to no purpose. There are many offices and gifts in the church, but all her members are equally necessary, as every pin is necessary in a vast and complicated machinery.

The church cannot say to her weakest member, "we have no need of thee," nor can that weakest member permit his talent to lie idle without risk to himself, injury to the church, and dishonor to Christ. He says reprovingly to every one in the secluded desert, "What doest thou here?" To the idler in the public market-place, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" To the eleventh hour loiterer, "Go, work to-day in my vineyard." To every one of a single talent, "Thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers." There are diversities of gifts and callings, but the same spirit and purpose in all; and these responsibilities God hath divided "to every man severally as he will," and all are members of the same body, actuated by the same spirit, and have actual relations and obligations. There is no place here for the idler, the trifler, the scoffer, and the voluptuary. Every church-member is of consequence as forming a part of the church. And there is no time for the soldiers and sentinels of the cross to indulge in luxury, to repose upon the lap of ease, to sink into effeminacy, or to fold their arms in self-

conscious orthodoxy, whilst the sinful and the errorist carry off the prizes. There may still be force in the command given to the Jewish army on the eve of battle, "What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest he make his brethren's heart faint, as well his heart!" The reason assigned why a certain denomination accomplished so much was, they were "*all* at it, and *always* at it." The church cannot resolve from existence these evils which she was designed to remove. It is not so much by *church* action as by *Christian* action that the mammoth evils of earth are to be removed. The church cannot resolve or *vote* them out of existence in her organized and ecclesiastical capacity; but each *member* in his individual and Christian agency, is to shine in the golden candlestick of the church, and is there and thus to be the light of the world. "It is both by *revolving* and *reflecting* the light of the sun that our planets shine." "It is not enough that a banquet is provided, and the guests invited: our Saviour has taught us to go into the highways and hedges, and 'compel them to come in.' It is not enough, on a coast lined with the decoy lights of pleasure, or obscured by the fogs of error, that a light-house is erected to guide the tempest-tossed to a haven; but the life-boat must buffet the surf, and breast the waves, to pick up the victims of the storm. It is not enough to plant a fort on the borders of the enemy's country, dangerous only to those who assail it, or come within the range of its guns; but it is also required that the church militant should be *in the field*, extending its conquests to every ham-

let and every heart." That she may improve the light which is developed, and use the instrumentalities which are given, she is manifestly to "sow beside all waters"—"in the morning and in the evening;" and especially in those fields which promise the most abundant harvest; and negligence here is most criminal. Yet, perhaps, there has never been a day since the church began to exist, when all, or even a majority of the members were wholly faithful and prepared for the discharge of the duties and responsibilities of Christians, or for the enjoyment of the privileges and blessings. The works of but one of the seven churches of Asia were found perfect before God.

There was but a small portion of Gideon's army just right for the battle; few prophets in the days of Elijah who had not bowed the knee to Baal; but few of the mighty army of the Israelites in the wilderness were at all times faithful to their heavenly leader; and thus probably it has ever been. But a small proportion of nominal Christians are blameless in spirit, soul, and body, and consecrated fully in their time, talents, substance, and influence to the service of God. Few are willing to make the sacrifice of comfort, money, time, and labor, involved in their duty. And in nothing, perhaps, is the unfaithfulness of many Christians more palpable and gross than in the neglect of their children, and of those means and instrumentalities which are adapted to secure their salvation, especially the Sabbath school. The duty of instructing the young and of moulding aright the millions of youthful minds and hearts, is a duty second to no other in importance, honor, or use-

fulness. And here is a means the most efficient and important next to the family, to which God has committed the instruction and salvation of the rising generations of the world. And though every church has been compelled to adopt it as a necessary part of its policy, yet there is a portion of every church who have stood aloof from this most responsible duty; and while they can but approve the work, they touch not the burden with so much as a finger, while the rising generations that are soon to have our country's destinies in their hands, are growing up a "*nation of unbelievers.*" When the first and mightiest impulses of every Christian's heart should be to rescue and bless the perishing; and he who seeks exception to this obligation cannot reasonably lay claim either to the character of a Christian or a patriot. Who needs the excitement of wonderful stories, or moving anecdotes, or passionate appeals, to prompt him to cherish and sustain an enterprise which so clearly involves the highest interests of coming generations? And for the church to neglect her duty in training up the rising generation for the service and glory of God, — or leave this work to others, will be to betray her trust, thin her ranks, cloud her glories, dry up the streams of her richest mercies, and call down the displeasure of her insulted Lord. Says one, "Had the auspicious moment been seized to gather the infant population of that day into the Sunday schools, we should be able to draw from their ranks a host of intelligent and well qualified laborers to supply our present exigencies."

And to whatever extent the energies of this institution have been crippled or its high promise unre-

deemed, to the same extent are those responsible who have been appointed to administer it, or who have been relied upon for the means of sustaining it. But though much is lost, all is not lost by our dilatoriness and languor.

As we could have done twenty years ago, with ease, what it would now be vain to attempt, so we can do now what will be equally impracticable twenty years hence. The duty of the church in this direction will appear when we consider, that after churches, ministers, and philanthropists have done all within their power for the reformation of society, there will still be a necessity for the labors of the Sabbath school and scope for its operations. The ever present spectacle will be before us, of a mass of juvenile depravity running riot in the streets of every city, unrestrained in its licentiousness, and uninstructed save in crime. Beyond the legitimate provisions of common schools, and the utmost efforts of mere parochial care, there is a wide and widening territory of ignorance, of vice, and crime.

The commission of the church was to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;" and this commission, which could not be literally fulfilled by those who received it, was to descend to their successors, and will not be fully obeyed while there is an isle of the sea remaining in darkness, a section of the earth slumbering in ignorance, or a human creature in all the world who has not heard its glad tidings. The church is to "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty,"—mighty in numbers, position, and influence. Error is to be repulsed by truth, darkness dispersed by light,

corruption must be consumed by the fires of purity, and infidelity must shrink away and yield before the omnipotence of divine faith. And we obey this commission as perfectly and as acceptably by preaching and teaching our next-door neighbor who knows not God, as by crossing oceans and traversing deserts that we may teach a heathen family; as much by teaching a little vicious child in our streets as an adult. And from what has already been said of the Sabbath school it is evident, that here is one of the most responsible instrumentalities ever committed to the Christian church. And while she is to speak through the Bible, the Sabbath, the press, the common school, the pulpit, — the various and multiplied channels of her utterance, she may especially make her voice to be heard through this medium, by its numberless officers, teachers, scholars, and schools.

In the ranks of the youth the church will find nearly all the available materials for her operations; and does not the voice of God's providence say, in reference to this endangered department of society, and the instrumentality which he has given to rescue them, — here are the materials, — here is the instrument, — and now is the time, — build for me! Thus the light and leaven of truth may be diffused abroad through all society, and the river of the water of life made to flow where bitter streams of death are poisoning the brain and destroying the soul. By this means she may penetrate the crowded recesses and thread the deep intricacies of society, stationing her youthful missionaries at the doors of the rail-cars, on the corners of the streets, and in all the great thoroughfares, peddling the truth where poison has been

previously retailed without rebuke, contesting and exposing the enemy in the gates, supplanting mischievous authors with works of abiding excellence, and placing an antidote beside the poison, by activity and watchfulness preoccupy the ground where the pestilence has not yet spread itself, and by personal remonstrance, proper example, and the blessing of God, convert the sinner from the error of his ways, dry up or renovate the fountains of pollution, and make glad the city of God. Christian! what can you do for Christ? Consider what he has done for you, and *is* doing and has promised, — the honor, the trust, the charge he has given you! Consider what he expects and deserves from you, and will demand at the last day!

What can you do in the Sabbath school for Christ and for Christianity? I close this chapter with the proposition, that an institution which so extensively and effectually blesses the world as does this, should have the universal patronage of society, — *especially of the Christian church.* And from the considerations which follow, it will be apparent, that if ever the church of God was placed in a responsible position in any nation or age, and called upon by all the voices of time and eternity to act, to act with energy and decision, it is the American church at the present time.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EXTENT, INCREASE, AND INFLUENCE OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.

Two centuries ago, there came over to these western wilds a few hundred men; with great principles in their bosoms, — God and man, liberty, civil and religious, the education of their children, and the renovation of the world. Guided by the light, and impelled with the energy of these principles, they went immediately to work building institutions for earth and heaven. Simple and virtuous in their manners, industrious and frugal in their habits, confiding in their faith, and devout in all their ways, providence smiled; population multiplied, wealth increased, the forests fell away at the sound of their axes, the natives retired before the potent and prolific energy of Saxon life, as before the Great Spirit himself. Cities rose upon the shores, the waters whitened to the sun under the sails of commerce, civil order unfolded itself as it were naturally, from the germ that blossomed in the Mayflower. And behold one of the greatest, freest, most wealthy, and powerful nations of the earth, stalks into history; — by her sudden appearance and commanding mien, fixing the astonished gaze of the world; and by the tread of her ponderous footsteps, arousing the slumbering

worlds of antiquity, — waking up dead empires and raising buried monarchies, — shaking trembling despots from their thrones, — by the magic wand of her influence hurling kingdoms, principalities, and powers into one common sepulchre, — and kindling in the hearts of universal man, a raging flame of desire for republican institutions. This mighty power burst forth in the political heavens as a star of the first magnitude in the galaxy of nations, lighting, cheering, and blessing the world; — extending from "ocean's wave to ocean's wave," and from the mountains of ice to the mountains of gold; a fraternity of thirty-one united republics, — great compeers and copartners in the cause of national civilization, — a constellation of free States, with no public force but public opinion; — moving by well-regulated law, each in its own proper orbit, around the capitol as their central sun, with a national domain of three million square miles, stretching through twenty-four degrees of latitude and fifty-eight of longitude, with thirty-three thousand miles of sea-coast, twenty thousand miles of navigable lakes and rivers, with harbors enough for all the commerce of the world; and a commerce which lets no waters run or winds blow except in its service; with canals, railroads, and telegraphs, — those "miracle workers of the day," — sufficient to outstretch the completed lines of connection in all Europe. Works more truly admirable than the wondrous avenues which radiated from imperial Rome, — avenues for facilitating the march of invading armies, or the return of triumphal chariots ladened with the spoils of desolated countries.

Our own iron pathways, the result of scientific

labor and skill unequalled by ancient times, are devoted to far different objects. They unite in friendly relations the inhabitants of widely separated regions, — minister to their mutual wants, — diffuse abroad the means of knowledge, — "and scatter plenty through a smiling land."

This nation presents every variety of soil, climate, and production, animal and vegetable, with inexhaustible mineral productions, the richest in the world; lofty mountains, magnificent prairies, and boundless forests, alive with songsters of every note, wing, and feather.

Our country, said one, is "the East, with her hills and her valleys, with her countless sails, and the rocky ramparts of her shores. It is the North, with her thousand villages, and her harvest-home, with her frontiers of the lake and the ocean. It is the West, with her forest sea and inland isles, with her luxuriant expanses, clothed in the verdant corn, with her beautiful Ohio and her majestic Missouri. It is the South, opulent in the mimic snow of the cotton, in the rich plantations of the rustling cane, and in the golden robes of the rice field. And the twenty-five millions of inhabitants who dwell upon the American soil, are composed of various nationalities, and comprise many of the best traits, noblest essentials, and rarest characteristics of the human race. God hath made here a nation out of the blood of all men, and with the freest and most independent government on the globe, — every citizen being a sovereign, and every sovereign a servant, that it is the proudest exclamation of man, — "*I am an American citizen!*" Cookman being asked in what place and in what

age of the world he would prefer to live, replied,—"in America in the nineteenth century!"

Though this republic has already become a leading power of the earth, she is still careering onward toward the goal of national glory, with an increasing magnitude and momentum unparalleled in the history of the world. The hand of civilization is throwing up towns, villages, and cities as by magic, which are vieing with the older cities of Europe, and becoming the Londons of this Western world. Institutions flourish as from indigenous soil, and States are rushing forth and knocking at the door of our Union for admission as equal and sovereign nations, before we are fairly familiar with their names.

And while the natural growth of our population is as great as that of any other country, the inhabitants of the earth are rushing to us in a tide of emigration that never ebbs, throwing upon the wharves of a single city ten thousand souls in two days, and in all our cities an average of more than a thousand souls for every day in the year. Regions which, but a few years ago, were the home of the savage and the haunt of the wild beasts, are now filled with an industrious population, and dotted with towns and cities.

Upon the groves and prairies where but recently the bison grazed unmolested, and the stately deer stalked through the forest glades, or perchance painted warriors joined in the deadly fray, with gleaming knife and brandished tomahawk, now peaceful villages and thriving towns arise. The site of the wigwam village is now occupied by the college or academy; and on the spot where the fearful

rites of the scalp dance were celebrated, the sacred house of God now rears its humble front.

Cities, number from thirty to fifty thousand inhabitants, with paved streets and numerous churches, flourishing manufactories, gigantic public works, and an intelligent society; where the oldest born inhabitants are scarcely out of their teens, and where, within the memory of the young men, the fierce savages made the hearts of their parents quake with fear, — roaming over the forests, as they did, in unbridled triumph, — wielding the tomahawk in terror, and singing the warwhoop, like demons of vengeance let loose from below. But they have fled to the distant mountains and read their doom in the setting sun; their expiring wail is silenced by the hum of business, the din of industry, and the tramp of traffic; while the plough of the settler is tossing up the bones of their ancestors, and removing all the foundations of their works.

And our civilized domain is constantly increasing with every successive wave of emigration which breaks into the wilderness beyond, and anon places the centre beyond the former circumference. The mind is lost and overwhelmed in the contemplation of future greatness; the fertility of the American soil, the salubrity of her climate, the freedom of her institutions, the rapid increase of her population, the ostensible purpose of Providence, all go to indicate that she will become as populous as any other portion of the world. Suppose it to reach the present ratio of population in Europe, — one hundred and ten to the square mile, — and there would teem on our vast territories a population of two hundred and

twenty millions. Or should the density equal that of China, — one hundred and fifty to the square mile, — our population would be three hundred millions. That the soil of the United States is capable of supporting this number, there can be no doubt.

A European writer of credit has asserted, that the "resources of the American continent, if fully developed, would afford sustenance to three thousand six hundred millions of inhabitants, or four times the present population of the globe, — and that the actual population will not fall short of two thousand millions, — giving to the United States two hundred and seventy millions. "And what is more surprising," says this writer, "there is every probability that this prodigious population will be in existence within three or four centuries."

"Our population is found to double every twenty-three years, — say, for safety's sake, twenty-five years, — we have to look forward only one hundred years, and our present ratio of increase gives us two hundred and eighty-eight millions; or one hundred and twenty-five years, and we have on our soil five hundred and seventy-six millions; or one hundred and fifty years, and we number more than the present population of the globe. Indeed, to take the result of one hundred years (two hundred and eighty-eight millions) as the ultimatum of increase to which the resources of our soil will allow our population to advance, and what a host have we here for the moral conquest of the world."

"We have, also, the advantage of the *English language*. Ours is the language of the arts and sciences, of trade and commerce, of civilization and religious

liberty. It is the language of protestantism — I had almost said, of piety. It is a storehouse of the varied knowledge which brings a nation within the pale of civilization and Christianity. As a vehicle of our institutions and principles of civil and religious liberty, it is 'belting the earth,' pushing east and west, and extending over the five great geographical divisions of the world, giving no doubtful presage that, with its extraordinary resources for ameliorating the condition of man, it will soon become universal. Already it is the language of the Bible. More copies of the sacred Scriptures have been published in the English language, than in all other tongues combined. And the annual issues in this language, at the present time, beyond all doubt, far surpass those of all the world besides. So prevalent is this language already become, as to betoken that it may soon become the langague of international communication for the world. This fact, connected with the next, that the two nations speaking this language have, within a few years past, gained a most extraordinary ascendency, holding in their hands nearly all the maritime commerce and naval power of the world, giving tone to national opinion and feelings, and sitting as arbiters among the nations, dictating terms of peace and war, and extending their empire over the nations of the East, holds out a glorious presage of the part *America* is destined to act in the subjugation of the world to Christ. I say America, believing that

> 'Westward the star of empire takes it way,
> The four first acts already past —
> A fifth shall close the drama of the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last.'

If it be a fact that wealth, power, science, literature, all follow in the train of numbers, general intelligence, and freedom, we may expect that America will, ere-long, become the metropolis of civilization, and the grand depository of the vast resources which Providence has prepared for the salvation of the world."

It is in no degree an assumption of egotism, personal vanity, or national pride, to take the ground that this nation is the glory of all nations. There can be no doubt that some of the profoundest purposes of the Creator, relating to time and man, are to be revealed in the destiny of America. The hand of Providence seems here to have fitted up a magnificent theatre, upon which are to be performed the loftiest deeds of time. America is to solve some of the mightiest problems of nations. She holds the keys of the earth; and she is to act a most sublime and important part in the drama of the world; to her is committed a weight of responsibility which never before rested upon man. She is to be the centre, the metropolis, the moral light-house of the world. Here is to be the battle ground of the mightiest conflict that the stars ever witnessed, or the earth ever felt — a conflict of opinions, of principles, of the powers of heaven and hell; and here, too, are to be witnessed the most brilliant achievements of light, the most signal triumphs of truth, the most decisive victory of right in all its elements, civil, social, intellectual and moral. And when the eventful day arrives that the nations of the earth shall awaken from the dust to meet the bridegroom in the skies, the voice of the American republic shall be heard in the anthem of the nations, chiming in the loudest and

welcoming in the highest, richest, noblest strains, the coming of the Messiah.

"Asia, Europe, and North America, are the three grand stages of humanity in its march through the ages. Asia is the cradle where man passed his infancy under the authority of law, and where he learned his dependence upon a sovereign master. Europe is the school where his youth was trained, where he waxed in strength and knowledge, grew to a man, and learned at once his liberty and his moral responsibility. America is the theatre of his activity during the period of manhood; the land where he applies and practises all he has learned, brings into action all the forces he has acquired; and where he is still to learn the entire development of his being and his own happiness, are only possible by willing obedience to the laws of his Maker; thus lives and prospers, under the protection of the Divine Husbandman, the great tree of humanity which is to overshadow the whole earth. It germinates and sends up its strong trunk in the ancient land of Asia; grafted with a nobler stalk, it shoots out new branches, it blossoms in Europe; in America only it seems destined to bear all its fruits." And in the heart of this great republic, there lies a valley which we will term the "valley of decision," for out of it are doubtless, to proceed the issues of the nation, as out of the heart the issues of life. It is three thousand miles in width, and fourteen hundred in breadth, with an area of four millions two hundred thousand square miles, and if populated as densely as China, would contain six hundred and thirty millions, nearly two thirds of the present pop-

ulation of the globe. Toward this valley the tide of emigration is setting in a whelming flood; into this chalice the nations of the earth are emptying their population; the ranges that skirt it on either side are hills which peep o'er hills, and Alps that arise on Alps; and from every summit which overlooks the boundless expanse may be witnessed the ceaseless tide of life, pouring in its myriads; here meet to dwell together as one, the representatives of every nation, kingdom, tribe, and tongue; and no sooner do they feel the magic power of our institutions, than a new era dawns upon them, and a new life stirs within them, awakening them to an intense activity, indomitable energy, and daring enterprise. Many of them have forsaken the graves of their fathers and scenes of their childhood, and sought here an asylum from oppression, famine, pestilence, and revolution; and looking up to the goddess of liberty their chains fall off, and new visions dawn on their pathway. "It is here that all the people of Europe may meet together with room enough to move in, may commingle their efforts and their gifts, and carry out upon a scale of grandeur hitherto unknown, the life-giving principle of modern times — the principle of free association." The hand which transferred the "sceptre of civilization" and the crown of knowledge from the banks of the Nile and the Euphrates, is bearing them onward to the valley of the Mississippi. There can be but little doubt that an influence will proceed from this valley which will decide the destiny not only of this republic, but of the *world.*

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DANGERS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.

YET while we indulge in these delightful anticipations, it should not be forgotten that all this thrift is not unattended with danger; and danger too, which is imminent and alarming. The train of State is on the track filled with eager and joyous travellers, impelled by the power of commerce, arts, science, and agriculture. But she has many sharp curves, drawbridges, ascents, and descents to pass, many obstacles to remove and signals of danger to regard; heated with a fever she moves with a tremendous rush, and the voice of God's providence echoing the teachings of his word instructs us, that we are in danger from our very prosperity. "A materializing luxury, a depraved literature, a false philosophy, a corrupting prosperity, an ill-used liberty, a wily superstition, — these are some of the chasms into which young America may plunge, against which young America must guard assiduously." "We are rushing along in the path of national development and extension, with a velocity of which the rapids at this moment in my view hardly furnish an exaggerated emblem; and there is too much cause for apprehension that the roar of the torrent, and its sparkling spray, and

its many-colored mist, may deafen, and dazzle, and blind us to the dangers which always beset an impulsive and precipitate career. It will be well if we do not forget that the only safe and sure progress is *the Pilgrim's Progress;* — a progress begun, continued, and ended in the fear of God;" "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

It must also be borne in mind that the myriads who are annually debarking upon our shores, to dwell on our soil, and act in the affairs of our government, are totally unlike the pilgrim sires, and actuated by different motives: they are many of them but the blightings of oppression and the ruins of humanity; nurtured in the school of intemperance, profanity, lewdness, and crime, and they import with them their errors, their infidelity and superstition; seeking in this land of freedom, not the glory of God and the elevation of the human race, but their own personal relief; they come not to help the nation, but to be helped; they come not as an element of strength but of weakness; and the annual influx of nearly half a million is a cause of alarm.

Said Governor Gardner in his late address, "Statistics show, that during the present decade, from 1850 to 1860, in regularly increasing ratio, nearly four millions of aliens will probably be poured in upon us. With this alarming decennial ratio of increase, — with the astonishing statistical facts that nearly four fifths of the beggary, two thirds of the pauperism, and more than three fifths of the crime spring from our foreign population, — that more than half the public charities, more than half the prisons and almshouses, more than half the po-

lice and the cost of administering criminal justice, are for foreigners." Popery, opened-mouthed and crocodile-like, is striving mightily to devour every manifestation of republicanism, — straining every nerve and plying every art which a misguided zeal and hatred to truth can devise, to destroy freedom of thought, prevent the education of the masses, blot out the Bible, and acquire an undue ascendency in the councils of the nation. And the fact that there are four millions of ignorant, superstitious, subtle, and designing Jesuits in our country, operating against our institutions, is portentous of danger. Slavery, "that fatal heritage of another age, is rocking the nation from foundation to dome, but still the Union drags it along as the convict drags his chain and ball, that the clanking of its manacles are heard in the very sanctuary of freedom, in our streets and at our doors; and the south and the north have hitherto joined hands and gone up to the temple of human oppression to do homage at its unholy shrine."

The war spirit, too, is far too rife in our country to insure the fruits of peace or the safety of the nation. Rebellion is sanctioned, — a disposition to disregard those statutes especially which conflict with our propensities or pursuits. Ours is an age in which the exploded errors of dark ages are being evoked from the past, and made attractive by that very light which once showed their hideousness. There is Mormonism, Millerism, Socialism, Comeoutism, and Spiritualism, — all of which to some extent are pervading the country, and all of which conspire to wrest the Scriptures, corrupt the faith, overthrow the church, and subvert the principles of the government. It is

doubtless true that there is not an uneducated youth or adult in the country, — but alas, for the multitudes whose training goes directly to weaken the nation and overthrow the government!

The land is full of seminaries, sciences, teachers, and text-books; and many of these seminaries, such as rum shops, bowling alleys, theatres, and brothels, are open day and night, into which thousands are enticed; gratuitous, obsequious instructors tempt and lure forth the unwary, unstable, and corrupt, toward the lore of vice and death. Some of them are far underground and out of sight, where the eye of purity never looks, the heart of innocence never beats; where the light of day never penetrates, nor the pure breath of heaven descends; where the very walls are blushing and black with the horrid spectacles which they have witnessed; — sweating and groaning with the awful mysteries they contain, and the very silence speaks in fearful echoes and warns to depart hence for the dead are there, — these are the gates of hell, and lead down to the chambers of death. But not only are these infernal seminaries located in all our great cities and villages, but their emissaries are stationed at the corner of every street, and door of every rail-car, and in all the public thoroughfares, penetrating the crowded recesses and threading the deep intricacies of society, peddling for a song their frivolous, infidel, and licentious literature.

Our country is flooded with books, periodicals, and publications made up of fiction, romance, and mental gossip, destitute alike of literary merit and common sense, — sickening to sound judgment, and disgust-

ing to the finer sensibilities, — weakening the intellect, perverting the taste, and developing the lower propensities of our nature; thus utterly disqualifying persons for the stern duties and virtues of this life, and shutting out every hope of heaven.

This has been denominated an age of books and reading; it is also an age of romance and fiction. There is a flood, a very deluge of worse than useless reading, as fatal to the morals and intellect wherever it sweeps, as was that of Noah to the lives of the antediluvians. Let our children drink in all this, and what is the result? Their minds are poisoned with the ruinous principles of a depraved literature, and bewildered with the false glare of fiction. Unfit for mental labor, vitiated in taste, and corrupted in moral feeling, they live in an imaginary world, the realities of life are too tame for them, as insipid as water to a dram-drinker, or sober sense to a fanatic. Says a report, "these streams of death are pouring forth from the press in torrents. Their circulation far surpasses that of any production of the day; in millions they are printed, by millions read. Formerly they were luxuries for the luxurious, but now they are for the mass. For a shilling the poor may know and sympathize with as much of the romantic villany of London, the refined and elegant debauchery of Paris, as in former times the rich for his guinea. Pollution is cheapened, corruption has a wide circulation at a small expense, extending from the centre table of the city drawing-room to the rough hewn boards of the log cabin. These evil spirits stalk boldly forth throughout the length and breadth of the land; spreading their poison into every dark spot

and fetid kennel of our cities, groping along in every sly place, presenting the most tempting appearance in their external aspect, but biting like a scorpion and stinging to death, in the first embrace, their helpless victims. Ere the father knows that the child has been exposed, its mind has been polluted by these vile works, which wend their way even to the cradles of our children, and unresisted seize upon their tender victims and pour their leprous distilment into their yielding minds.

"With the young, is the market for the millions of these productions; it is the pocket-money of the boy and girl that keeps the press teeming with cheap novels."

"It is estimated that there are five thousand five hundred publications of this class on the trade list. They are as varied in their degrees of moral obliquity as the national characteristics or the associations and habits of their authors, or the scale of morals of their publishers and readers. All the way down from salvation without a Saviour, or morality without the gospel, to the grossest licentiousness and the boldest infidelity, readers of every measure of false taste and false principles are catered for with infernal skill. Respectable and even Christian publishers have lent their presses to multiply their piracies on all decent literature. Christian booksellers are almost necessitated by the custom of the trade, and by the vitiated taste of the community, to deal, more or less, in trash and poison. And even religious households are invaded by authors whose touch is pollution."

A respectable English writer states, "that 10,400,-

000 copies of infidel or polluting newspaper sheets are circulated in the British realms, besides more than 18,000,000 sheets, manifestly pernicious, is enough, says an author who quotes from the 'Power of the Press,' if any thing can do it, to send a thrill of horror through the whole nation, and to rouse into activity every friend of his Bible, his country, and his God." But is there not ground for apprehension, that with the greater number of readers, and the cheaper rate at which newspapers circulate in America, a much greater number of demoralizing papers are issued here than in Great Britain?

"Nearly seventy millions of newspaper sheets are published annually in a *single city*. Grant that the influence of four fifths of them all is on the side of good morals and religion, and it would leave a residuum of evil equalling one half of the combined circulation of all the corrupt presses of England, Scotland, and Ireland. But is not this too much to grant, when 2,756,000 papers, or nearly a twentieth part of the whole number, are issued on the Sabbath, and other periodicals, having each a total circulation of from 200,000 to 1,000,000 annually, are filled with trash or pollution? The effects of such a wide spread diffusion of corrupting publications cannot be otherwise than disastrous." They are a blight on public morals and private virtue. Parental authority is weakened; the imagination is unduly developed; habits of mental intoxication are formed; every-day duties are neglected; a disrelish for sober, solid reading is engendered; religious books, and even the Bible, are slighted; the gospel is undermined; the

Spirit of God is grieved, and many, many souls destroyed.

Says Mr. James, "Let it be imagined — if imagined it can be — what must be the moral state of multitudes in this country, when nearly thirty millions of such pestiferous publications are annually going out from among the masses of our population. He has led us to the door of Satan's workshop, and has thrown open to you the scenes of that awful laboratory of mental and moral poison. He has shown authors, compositors, printers, engravers, publishers, booksellers, venders by myriads, all busy and indefatigable, to do — what? To destroy the Bible, to pull down the cross, to dethrone God, to subvert religion, and to uproot the church, to turn man into a thinking and speaking brute, and, as a necessary consequence, to overturn all morality, to poison the springs of domestic happiness, to dissolve the ties of social order, and to involve our country in ruin."

Let us look in another direction to the element of ignorance that exists in our country. There are millions of our countrymen, scattered over our vast territory, who enjoy almost none of the stated means of grace; are destitute of the preached and written word; deprived of educational blessings, and as much demand effort for their intellectual and moral elevation as do the inhabitants of Papal and Pagan lands. In this nominally intelligent republic, according to the late census, there are more than five hundred thousand men and women who can neither read nor write. Almost under the eaves of well filled sanctuaries, families may be found as far from

God and as ignorant of religion as the Hindoo; within a stone's throw of a Bible depository, habitations are without the sacred treasure; and in sight of bookstores men live as destitute of books as if the art of printing were unknown.

Dr. Chalmers, in urging an exploration of society said, it would show "how families within the distance of half a mile may lapse, without observation or sympathy on our part, into a state of practical heathenism, — how, within half an hour's walk, hundreds may be found who morally and spiritually live at as wide a separation from the gospel and all its ordinances, as do the barbarians of another continent, — how many, in our crowded recesses, which, out of sight, and out of Christian sympathy, have accumulated there, might, at length, sink and settle down into a listless and lethargic, and, to all appearances, impracticable population; leaving the Christian teacher as much to do with them as has the first missionary when he touches on a yet unbroken shore. Men often forget, that while so many lights may be blazing around them as almost to dazzle their eyes, and prevent their seeing the existing desolations, there may be, and there are tens of thousands of abodes in the midst of us, cheered by no gospel ray, — with no book divine to be a light to their feet and a lamp to their path."

One of the Western States, comprising a territory nearly equal to all New England, and a population of more than one hundred thousand, is said not to contain a single bookstore; and a mountainous region, nearly two hundred miles wide and five hundred miles long, is not known to have such a neces-

sary accompaniment of civilization. Western colporters tell us of many districts where an average of one half the people are not able to read or write, and from one fifth to one third are without a whole copy of the Bible; where school-houses and churches are few and far between, and hunting, racing, drinking, gambling, Sabbath desecration, and such like things, are the common amusement and pastime of the people. More than one hundred and thirty-seven thousand families, embracing at least seven hundred and fifty thousand souls, have been found destitute of all religious authors; not even a hymn book or catechism. Whole counties, larger than some of our New England States, have been said to be without any minister; whilst their inhabitants, from year to year, hear not the sound of the gospel; other large sections hear it but occasionally.

A pastor from Ohio wrote, a few years since, "we have fifty towns with an average population of eight hundred each, almost entirely without any kind of preaching. It was also stated, that of five States, less than one third of the population were under the direct influence of any evangelical instruction. There are, therefore, hundreds and thousands of children and youth in our land — even natives of our soil — who have lived to this day without one intelligible idea of revealed truth; whose moral and intellectual nature has never been cultivated at home or elsewhere, — who are growing up to be men and women, utterly without Sabbath-keeping or church-going habits, and with little more than natural instincts to preserve among them the ordinary proprieties and decencies of human society. And even

in New-England, with its dense population, intelligent ministry, and flourishing churches, competent witnesses testify that fully one third of the families neglect the sanctuary.

Looking in another direction still, we cannot suppose that the erring, infidel, and heathen hosts who land upon our shores, leave their principles behind them, and spontaneously become Christians by arriving in a Christian country. For behold the schools and temples of India and China rising up among us, not only in the far South but even in the Middle States! Our Christian institutions witness the worship of heathen idolatry.

More than two thousand Lutheran and German Reformed churches, indicate an immense population sympathizing with the German ecclesiastical symbols of faith; a thousand Roman Catholic priests must have tens of thousands of adherents.

Thirty thousand State prison convicts in our country must have graduated from many a seminary of vice; and the thirty thousand inebriates who have annually died in this country from intemperance, must have drank wildfire from many a burning pool; nineteen thousand lawyers must have some business to employ and sustain them; thirty millions of pestiferous publications annually going out among the masses of our population, must be doing a work of death.

Intemperance, licentiousness, gambling, profanity and Sabbath-breaking, all have a direct tendency to corrupt and destroy a people. And the facts that every eighth man in this republic is a slave, and does not own his hands or his head; that a large majority of

the population habitually absent themselves from the public worship of God on the Sabbath; that States and communities violate with impunity many of their laws, which were enacted for the suppression of vice; that every receding wave of the Atlantic returns freighted with a living cargo and discharges upon our shores fresh supplies of anti-republican principles; that the American eagle has been taught to look with eagle eye, with covetous and aggressive hands upon other dominions lying contiguous, — these facts demonstrate that we have within us elements of antagonism and weakness! Doubtless the passions and practices that have paralyzed the industry, corrupted the morals, and effected the ruin of many a nation, are raging in the breasts of millions in our country.

We are told of an ancient bay along the Mediterranean Sea, where the winding shore brought the winds and waves together so as to create the most enchanting music, and lead the passing sailor to enter; but he entered only to find an ocean grave. We are warned by the voice of all antiquity, and the example of all republics; the threatening which the arm of Jehovah held out over the first Christian nation, is still suspended by the hand of justice over its successors. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve me shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." And a voice, solemn as the voice of warning and of woe, seems to come up from the sepulchre of nations in response to the declaration.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE REMEDY OF OUR SOCIAL AND NATIONAL EVILS.

LET us contemplate the remedy which a gracious heaven has provided to arrest this tide of ruin, — this awful cataract of perdition, — which is dashing over the precipice of infidelity into the gulf of the bottomless pit, and precipitating myriads and nations into the abyss of ruin, — the remedy for our social, civil, and national evils. This is to be found in the Bible.

The Bible is the great remedial storehouse. This, in the hearts and hands of the Christian church in its varied instrumentalities, is our hope; our safety must arise from civilizing, Christianizing, and enlightening our population. *For universal evangelization is as much the price of liberty as "eternal vigilance."* It should be remembered that no real republic can exist except it be based upon the deep foundations of divine truth.

Republicanism and freedom are but mere names for beautiful but impossible abstractions, except in the case of a Christianly educated people. Society has been divided into four states, — the barbarous, half civilized, civilized, and enlightened. A map, representing the moral condition of these depart-

ments of society, would exhibit the first, the barbarous (which embraces far the largest portion of the earth), enshrouded in gloom, and buried in the deepest darkness, where neither clouded sun nor dusky moon appear, but all is dead, leaden, unmoving blackness; and the dim stars, shining upon the gloom, would show that it is blank midnight; the bow and arrow, the scalping-knife and the idol, would show that the inhabitants subsist by hunting; that they are cruel, and without the knowledge of the true God. In these regions, mind slumbers; the social state is formless, or confounded *in* ruin; and some of the richest, most fertile realms of earth do little more with their boundless resources, than minister to the bare necessities of degraded, indolent, mere animal man.

The second, the half civilized state, would appear lying in deep eclipse, where nothing of the sun is seen but the field of darkness in which his whole disc is immersed, or in dim penumbral shadows, through which pass a few struggling rays of light. The axe instead of the tomahawk, would show improvement; but the dusky moon tells that it is still night there.

The third, the civilized state, would show the sun just emerging from the horizon, and casting his effulgent beams across the earth; revealing, or rather restoring, the vestiges of primitive creation. Here the rude dwelling, the school-house, the church, and the village appear; and instead of the tomahawk and axe, we see the plough; here also we see the Bible.

The fourth, or enlightened portions attract at once

the eye of the observer, because of their splendor in contrast with the surrounding darkness. Here, the great orb of day has gone far on his journey to the meridian, pouring down a flood of effulgence, and irradiating the earth with the beautiful and richly combined lights of civilization, art, science, commerce, agriculture; of political, social, intellectual, moral, and religious life. The splendors amidst which they lie are unconcealable; the boundaries within which they are included are defined as within a circumference of sunbeams.

From this survey a question arises, What makes the difference between these divisions of the earth's moral surface? What cause, adequate to the effect, is found everywhere present within the one division, and everywhere absent from the other? To this question doubtless but one answer can be given. "*The Bible*, the Bible *alone* makes the difference; the Bible, as the revealed mind of *God*, acting on the subject mind of *man;* the Bible, bringing with it a knowledge of the true God, and of the real relations between himself and his creatures; the Bible, awakening the mind of man from the lethargy of barbarism, quickening that mind with the penetrating light of true religion, making it conscious of its powers, its dignity, and its destiny, and rousing it resistlessly to action, to inquiry, to progress! Removing the depravity that covers the heart, and chains that bind the intellect; this is the great, deep laid, and ultimate cause, which, putting a thousand minor causes into action, involves the surprising result which distinguishes the land of Christian light from the realms of pagan darkness.

"The mind of man never will develop itself in all the results of civilization, without a knowledge of the true God; of the real relations which subsist between him and his creatures; of the nature of the soul, and of the destiny which awaits it in eternity. God made the soul; in certain great features, he made it like himself; and nothing can put that soul in right action, and move it forward in right progress, but a true knowledge of itself, its Maker, and the relations which alone can bind them together. Take away his knowledge, — in other words, take away the Bible, which conveys it, — and the mind dwindles, because deformed, lies stupid, and finally falls into sensuality and savagism. We might mention, as confirmatory of the position taken, the fact that those countries, which once had the Bible, but have since lost it, have long ago passed into the penumbral shadows of semi-civilization, if not into the dark eclipse of actual barbarism: such are Asia Minor, Syria, and Northern Africa; and the additional fact, that those parts of Christendom which yet have the Bible, but have it for the most part locked from the knowledge of the common mind, are less lustrous with the combined and central lights of civilization, and verge most nearly towards the lines which separate waning and vanishing light from incipient and crescent darkness. Such are Greece and Russia, and papal Italy, Austria, Spain, Ireland, Mexico, and South America, as compared with the present intellectual illumination and elevation of protestant Germany, England, and Scotland, and our own United States."

The civilized world sees the difference between

Scotland and Ireland, though twin sisters by nature and lying in mutual embrace; and between the north and south of Ireland; between the republics of the United States and Mexico, though lying in close proximity; and between the republic of the United States and any of the countries of North America, or any of the republics of South America. The same difference is discernible in individuals who believe and obey the precepts of the Bible, and those who reject them.

"If ever there was upon the face of the earth a company of men who incorporated the Bible into themselves, and themselves into the Bible, it was the company that crossed the Atlantic in the Mayflower, and offered the first white man's sacrifice on the inhospitable coast of New England. Their laws, their judgments, their municipal records, their public documents and private letters, are full of the Bible. It furnished the light of their rude dwellings, — it was the arbiter of their momentous counsels, — it was the buoy of their burdened spirits, and the nourisher of faith and hope and joy, in all their disasters and disappointments. The Bible was every man's book, and every day's book, — the conversation, the salutations, and, in a word, the whole intercourse of the people was full of the Bible. And it has been nothing but this steeping in Bible truth, this early salting down of the population of this land with the savor of Divine knowledge inculcated in the early teaching of the New England fathers, which has preserved our country from being overwhelmed and destroyed.

"Nothing has maintained the country in its insti-

tutions of public order, domestic peace, and personal liberty before the power of an incessant and threatening deluge, but the abiding influences of the hereditary instruction, conferred upon generation after generation by our Christian fathers; influences, buried so deep that all the pickaxes of infidelity have not been able to break them up; influences which have been sent abroad so extensively, and have entered so deeply into the vitals and minds of the people, that no power of evil has been able to eradicate them. It has been well said, that "Human happiness has no perfect security but freedom; freedom none but virtue; virtue none but knowledge; and neither freedom, nor virtue, nor knowledge has any vigor or immortal hope except in the principles of the Christian faith, and in the sanctions of the Christian religion."

The voice of our civilians and statesmen is, "Our institutions, based on the intelligence and virtue of a free people, will founder without the universal application of the means of intellectual and moral elevation among the masses;" "that if our country would render her union perpetual, if she would elevate to a lofty height the pillars of her fame, and place herself preëminently above all other nations, of the present and of all other times, she must draw her example from the Divine Being, and take little children in her arms and bless them, by pouring into their infant minds the lessons of early and effectual instruction."

A momentous question, therefore, arises with the church and nation, as to the best method of evangelization; the best time to imbue the mind and

heart of the community with divine truth. It would seem a hopeless task to convert to Christianity all of our heterogeneous population, or to enlighten them with the rudiments of an intellectual and moral education, or even to impress them with a sense of their relations and obligations to God and man. Many of them are utterly unapproachable through bigotry, jealousy, and hatred, and many have ever breathed the atmosphere of error and superstition, which was poured into the very fountain of their being, and has "grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength." Many are hardened in vice and infidelity; very many are bound with the iron bands of sectarian prejudice; all, all are averse to truth. And they have all received an early training which renders them implacable foes to the best interests of society, if not to its peace and safety. They have brought with them few means of supplying their mental, moral, or spiritual wants. They have brought no schools, and seldom ministry, except that which is leagued with all that is loathsome in character, false in doctrine, and withering and crushing in spiritual despotism. These are the powers which, in connection with those that already exist, will ordinarily exert their blighting influence upon all the institutions and interests of our country for time and eternity. And it is to be remembered, that whatever dispositions to a thriftless, vagabond, or vicious life they bring with them, they are not chastened or counteracted by the character of our institutions. With exaggerated impressions of the ease with which a livelihood may be obtained here, and utterly

false views of the nature of the liberty they expect to enjoy, they are quite as likely to deteriorate as to improve.

Being ignorant of letters, neither the Scriptures nor any other printed matter can be of much avail, until they have learned to read them; the public means of instruction in many portions of the country being totally inadequate to give a knowledge even of this art, they are left to the Sabbath school, as their only alternative for an education. And their habits, prejudices, and moral characters being fixed, the conclusion seems inevitable that our chief hope in respect to a large portion of our community, is with their children. These children are to be much mightier than their parents, and are to exert a far greater influence in the nation. And whether it is like in kind to their parents, will depend upon the amount of counter influences which have been brought to bear upon them. There is a fierce contest now waging across the minds and hearts of these children especially, — a contest between the powers of light and darkness; and whether victory perches upon the banner of truth and turns upon Zion's side, will depend, under God, upon the fidelity and aggressive efficiency of the church.

Children are the nation's and world's Æolian harp, and it depends upon the element that strikes it, whether it vibrates well or ill. If but a summer breeze plays upon its strings, it is like the melodious notes that sprang from Memnon's statue, when touched by the rays of the morning sun. But if the rude and gusty storm runs roughly over the chords,

it flings off notes harsh and discordant. *But attune society here, and it will pour forth melody from a million strings.*

There are few children in our country who are not accessible to the evangelist; and few parents who may not be reached directly through their children; and the most eloquent and best adapted arguments which can reach them, are the religious books, the songs of praise, and the lessons of instruction which their children carry them, and the fruits of piety which they exhibit to them. For every thing that enters the dwelling through the children comes with a grace, let it enter by what door it will. And their books are read with an avidity and interest which plainly shows, that though the aim was directed at the children, the fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, were not missed. One thus describes the process: "The Sunday school is formed: the mothers come, and then the fathers, to see the children, and to hear them sing and recite; and as the men wipe the tears from their eyes with their rough hands, the missionary perceives that he has made one furrow in a primeval soil, — the axe is laid at the root of the trees."

The incrustations of depravity and ignorance must be broken off piecemeal, and the light of truth and knowledge introduced particle by particle. And we would not disparage any means for the accomplishment of this result; but who can go to these people with a light step and buoyant hope, and drill them in lessons of domestic economy, and the rules of providence and thrift? Who expects to reach their hearts, through the thick corro-

sion which coats their sympathies, or to call the better instincts of their nature from the grave in which they have been so long buried, by representing to them the obligations of religion and the dictates of parental love, or by urging the claims of society upon them for the right training of their offspring. No, — the effort is all but absolutely hopeless. And whilst these people feel and offer the excuses that they are too old to learn, they are hardened in vice and past hope, their chains have grown into their flesh, and their fetters rusted upon their limbs, — they manifest great interest in their children, and almost invariably recommend them to the notice of the philanthropist. And it must be borne in mind, also, that the best time to instill into the mind the principles of patriotism, liberty, morality, and virtue, is the season of youth.

It is therefore said, that "he who plants one truth clearly in a child's conscience plants there a hundred governors." Then truth finds the fewest obstacles in its way; then it sinks the deepest, abides the longest, and works most mightily. And the greater success which has attended efforts among the youthful classes of society, goes directly to show that the Sabbath school is the chief instrumentality in the hand of the church for the salvation of the nation and the world. And while the church is awakened to increased zeal, enlarged benevolence, and greater prayerfulness, she is to turn her eye most hopefully to this institution as the means of supplying her wastes, augmenting her power, and extending her dominion. And it is a fact worthy of our consideration, and indicative both of our duty and the di-

vine purpose, that God gave us the Sabbath school, and gave it to the *infancy* of the nation; and that its importance has been constantly increasing with the increase of our population, the advancement of society in the arts and sciences, and the accumulating influences which crowd upon the highway of our national existence and destiny.

What a public mercy was it, that the Sunday school should come up just as the elements of humanity began to quicken, and the tide of immigration to move; that it might shed its healthful, purifying, forming influences over whole masses of mind, that were destined either to help forward, or with dreadful energy desolate the hopes of piety and human happiness! What a remarkable providence that this seed of intelligence, patriotism, freedom, and piety was cast in, to spring up with the beginning, and grow with the growth of this infant empire!

Our great country has been peopling with peculiar rapidity, and under peculiar, and in some respects unfavorable conditions. What hordes of the ignorant and destitute have been brought to our shores within fifty years! Where now are they and their children? Why have they not swamped the ship? The true answer is full of hope. It is because they were met by circumstances, moral and social, which were favorable to the removal of their mental and bodily destitutions. They met schools, books, churches, freedom, industry,—all teaching self-respect and self-reliance. The tide swelled westward; the forest gave way to the farm; the village, the town, the city, have grown upon the haunts of the wild beast. The progress has been the marvel of the world,

for its rapidity and yet orderliness. Carried along from point to point, such a population might have been expected to ignore entirely the necessity of religion and learning, and they would have done so, had not the previous impulse of the land toward learning and religion, been too strong to be ignored.

So the church, the school-house, the Bible, the teacher, the missionary, have gone with or followed in the wake of the caravans; and where they rested, the banner of truth has been set up. And what has been the result? Not perfect, indeed, but undeniably great. It was something to overtake the growing population with the most scanty means of moral influence; but the statistics of the last census reveal the almost incredible fact, that accommodation for public worship has been provided by the people at the rate of millions of dollars, and that the principle of voluntary contribution has erected one church edifice for about every six hundred and fifty persons of our whole population of nearly twenty-five millions.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

We must not lose sight of the fact, that the Sabbath school has ever held a prominent rank in the sacramental host of God's elect agencies; it has often been the advance guard to pioneer and pilot the way; it has borne the banner of the cross with the flag of the Union. "Through the means of Sabbath day schooling, thousands have been rescued from the perils of sin and converted into agents of blessing. Through this means — the proof of the fact abounds — religion has many a time taken her first step upon the holy mission which was to carry blessing through many a godless neighborhood in city and country. Through this means, parents who have lived ungodly lives, the victims of a vulgar infidelity, or of an equally vulgar superstition, have been reached through their children and brought to God. Through this means, many a church has been built, and many a minister called to labor in vicinities where no other instrumentality was at first available. In short, through this means, whenever it has been tried, a cheap solution has been found of the great social problem, — how shall we save the republic and freedom from the immense strain put upon it by a growing population, and a terrific material prosperity?"

What common schools are to the State — securing intelligence and freedom — Sabbath schools are to the church; promoting an enlightened piety, and perpetuating a sound theology. Thousands upon thousands who have cast in their lot with the people of God, were constrained to his service by means of the faithful teaching and affectionate expostulations of Sunday schools. In the cloud of invisible witnesses, by which we are compassed about, there is a multitude whose first emotions of love and gratitude to the Saviour, were awakened here.

"From isle to isle, from sea to sea, from shore to shore, from the rising to the setting sun, this agency of moral power has rolled a wave of gracious influence, whose increasing aggregate of power will not be known until the judgment-day. And more, — with no greater success than has attended this institution in past time, its future triumphs will add thousands to the company of the redeemed in glory." This is one of the weak things of the world which Providence takes to confound the mighty.

Every Sabbath school scholar is made a most efficient colporteur, — carrying his books into the family circle, and by his own interest in them commending them to the attention of every member. How much good fifty, sixty, or a hundred such within the bounds of a congregation may accomplish — changing their stock, and returning with smiling faces and cheerful hearts, fifty-two times within the compass of a year — eternity alone can reveal.

"Our log cabin Sunday schools," says a Western man, "are so many reservoirs scattered over our val-

leys. Every Sunday school is a distributing reservoir; with twenty to fifty families, from one hundred to three hundred immortal souls are supplied with the living waters, of which, if a man drink, he shall never die." Who can estimate the influences on society of five millions of children educated in the Sunday school? And it may not be an extravagant calculation to suppose, that, every ten years, five millions of persons who have been Sabbath school scholars enter into active society. More or less they may be supposed to be influenced by the principles inculcated at those schools. Restrained themselves by moral considerations, their examples may have some influence on an equal number of their associates. Here, then, is an element of power which must be salutary on our social and political relations. The good thus done cannot be fully known and appreciated, as the amount of evil which it prevents cannot be measured.

One who had contemplated the progress of this institution with an evil eye, was led to exclaim: "It is in vain to oppose the spread of Sunday schools; they will ultimately overrun the land, and the devil himself cannot help it." "These Sunday schools have done more for their side," said an enemy of all schemes of Christian benevolence, "than any thing else they have ever tried; I AM REALLY AFRAID OF THEM; they spring up as in a night, and are spreading all around us."

A school serves a moral purpose not unlike that of the *sawyers* in the Western waters. A tree falls from the banks of the Mississippi, and is borne down

the stream, till one end becomes fast on the bottom, while the other is left to be swayed to and fro by the current. The floating materials gather in the tree top, and soon form a little island. This, in a few years, becomes real land, and is a matter of bargain and sale.

So it is in society. One position taken for truth and right is a nucleus. The good will gather around it; the floating, the careless, and the doubting will be stopped by it; and it will prove a strong stand taken for God. The flesh, the world, and the devil have these sawyers, by a kind of preëmption, in all the great rivers of society, the thoroughfares of the community; and they will soon gather islands that will require years to remove. Now they can, with comparative ease, be taken from the channels. "We put down Sunday schools," says one, "to gather the floating material, to collect around it twigs and straws at first, and then fragments of broken trees and timber, and wrecked craft and cargoes, and by and by a little soil is there to hoist a flagstaff on; and thus it increases, we hardly see or know how, till there is a little island of 'real land.' So — exactly so — have grown up churches, and church edifices, and church privileges — we have almost said without number — even from the little *nucleus* which the Sunday school forms. Who would hew down trees, and shape them in due architectural order, and then in the fabric for a sawyer in the Mississippi, when a tree, that caves in from the bank and floats to a resting-place, will answer every purpose?"

Each such organization may be termed a trumpet-tongued advocate for truth, whose eloquence speaks ever, costs nothing, and is worth every thing.

"Of all the institutions," says a report, "which benevolence and Christian duty has devised, we give to the Sabbath school, in its length and breadth, the first position. Its influence reaches all, — for all can attend. Who shall set bounds to the good results which must follow? Who shall dare to prescribe the benefits that shall flow to a nation whose youth in all quarters — towns, villages, and country — sustain the Sabbath school? The gentle teachings, with kind monitions poured into the youthful heart, may mould and fashion the character through all subsequent life. The hopes of a nation, its liberty, and all that makes it great and durable, can never fail when its youth have been thoroughly trained here." The Sabbath school approaches with its instructions, just when they sink the deepest and last the longest. It makes a sacred deposit of the soundest rules of life, of public duty, of private conduct: rules which form the faithful friend, the upright citizen, the godly man; rules that will found our hopes on "the Rock of Ages;" that will raise a shield to guard our dearest earthly privileges, and train up a generation that we may hope will defend the cause of truth and civil liberty, when those who train them shall have done with the duties and the toils of time.

The Sabbath school has become the garden spot of national righteousness, where young plants are reared, designed in due time to be placed, we hope, amongst the most honorable that fill high and

responsible stations in this widely extended and powerful republic.

The following resolution was offered by the Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen: "Resolved, that the Sunday schools, by laying the foundation of public and private integrity and intelligence, provide the best preservative of our rights and liberties, and the best guarantee for the peace and good order of society; and that in this view they deserve the special patronage of the statesman and patriot."

If from the young the church is to look chiefly for its increase, then is the society that "takes care of the children," consulting the best interest of the church, and deserves the countenance of all who can say to Zion, Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces.

If the virtue of a people depend on the principles imbibed in youth, and if, in a government like ours, the prosperity of the nation depend, as without controversy it does, on the virtue of the people, then is this society, in common with other causes, laying the foundation of our nation's prosperity. It is implanting in the hearts of the people those principles which alone can qualify them to be good citizens, and can preserve the nation from that ruin with which it will be overwhelmed, should vice and infidelity loosen the restraints of virtue, and make our population a turbulent mass of moral pollution. Every year, therefore, every month, every Sabbath day, every Christian's daily prayer, and every patriot's effort should tell upon the momentous interests of so many immortal souls, and of the church and State in the future.

"As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth." To neglect our youth is to commit a great military blunder. It is to leave our arrows to rust, and become blunt and totally unfit for use, when they ought to be collected and polished and fitted for the day of battle. It was the correct opinion of Lycurgus and many of the ancient philosophers, that the chief concern of a nation should be the training of its children; and why should not this be one of the chief concerns of the church? Plato's idea was, that children should not only be the children of their parents, but also the children of the commonwealth; and does not Christianity require that children should belong not only to their parents and the commonwealth, but also to the Lord our God? Said a Spartan mother, as she waited at the city gate, to the messenger from the army, "How has gone the battle?" "Thy three sons are slain," was the reply. "Sir," cried the woman with indignation, "I asked not for my sons, but for my country. How stand the arms of Sparta?" With a nobler spirit let every Christian parent feel that his children belong to Christ; let his first solicitude be, that they do their duty to him in upholding and promoting his cause.

The progress of the earth toward the millennium will be in the ratio of the education of her children. And while our legislators are proposing remedies and anxiously inquiring for the best means to *prevent* crime, why is it that the *sources* whence bad principles proceed are so entirely overlooked?

Men may bring forward their fanciful schemes for

human improvement; governments may enact laws and decree penalties to restrain the evil tendencies of the wicked; but piety, or Christian character, must be a growth. Its increase and beauty must be wrought by the activity of spiritual life, showing first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. Fires will not burn it into the soul; statutes and penalties will not force it; self-torture and penance will as little avail; sacraments and formal observances will not of themselves accomplish more. Its being is its life as a spiritual creature of God, quickened by His light and warmed by His love. It is the silent, but powerful working of the leaven of righteousness that is to reach the hearts and reform the lives of both young and old. By the fear of the Lord men are deterred from evil.

Such influences will accomplish far more by prevention, than can be cured by the most imposing or cruel punishments. It is far better to contribute voluntarily for the instruction and rescue of neglected and exposed children, than be taxed for their oversight, arrest, and imprisonment! Let us estimate the tax which every ignorant and vicious boy or girl imposes on the community, — and it will amount oftentimes to an hundred fold the expense of a thorough wholesome education, beginning at two years of age and ending at twenty.

"Seven years' good schooling, at four dollars a term, will cost less than the sheriff's bill for hanging a man. And this hanging is but the last item in a long bill of expenses, for the arrest, trial, support, etc., of the malefactor, not counting the loss of life. And

few, if any, cases can be found, in which seven years of good schooling and death by the halter have met in one and the same party."

In the absence of hallowed influences from millions of the children and youth of our country, and in the absence, too, of the divinely appointed institutions of the gospel, what so nearly resemble these as a good Sunday school? What may be more safely trusted as a substitute? And yet how common is it to hear almost every other agency recognized in the confidence of men, in their prayers, and in their living and dying charities, before or in preference to the Sunday school. Thousands are freely given to coax or constrain the adult mind from its follies and idols; but when a *preventative expedient* is proposed, — when we ask for means to set the young traveller right at the outset of his journey, we must content ourselves with units.

The infant mind of the next generation is doubtless the most vulnerable point of the nation. And if it is the duty of the State to guard well this point by equipping the youth with the armor of light and of truth, much more is it the duty of the church, and of the entire church; nor can she neglect or shrink from the discharge of this duty without consequences the most disastrous. The tone of piety in the church and her disposition to benevolence, turns largely upon her acquaintance with and continued study of the Bible; and her growth in perfection and power, will depend under God, upon the exercise of her gifts and graces; and what institution in all the realm of means was ever committed to the church so

admirably adapted to facilitate these important duties?

The Sabbath school lessons, with the multiplied books, addresses, instructions, and suggestions, place before both scholar and teacher every topic of revelation, and show the whole of duty and of destiny. They take hold of the hand of his free agency, his conscience and reason, and lead him through all the labyrinth of the divine realm; through the rich and flowery fields of his promises, through the dark valley of his mysteries, over the flaming Sinai of his threatenings, into the strait gate of his proposals, and along the highway of his purposes. And what means is so well calculated to reduce all these instructions to practice, to plant them in the heart and draw them out in the life, to call into action the latent powers, awaken the dormant energies, and improve the "unemployed talent of the church," to develop the reserved power of each individual member, and augment the aggregate of their efficiency?

The time has passed for the slothful steward of one talent to find even a show of excuse, or for the idler at the eleventh hour to say, "no man hath hired me."

This institution has opened a field for usefulness at every man's door and in every man's pathway; and while many of the aged regret that they were "born too soon or out of place," when there were no means of making their mark deep and wide upon the race, an opportunity is now presented for retrievement. We have remarked that an individual man is worth ten times as much as he was fifty years

ago; and is not his responsibility increased in the same ratio? For responsibility must walk hand in hand with privilege.

This institution dispenses "to one man five talents, to another three, to another one, to *every* man according to his several ability." "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven." "Every church-member," says Mr. Todd, "should, if possible, have something to do with the Sabbath school, either as a teacher or scholar." He says, also, "that if the church were to do her duty, almost all the congregation would be connected with the Sabbath school, in some relation or other."

"We believe it to be the language of sober truth," says another, "that if the church of Christ, since the year eighteen hundred, had done all that Sunday schools alone would have enabled her to do for the conversion of the world, the gospel would be preached at this moment, to every kindred, and people, and tongue upon the face of the earth. If, for the last thirty years, the industry, intelligence, faith, and prayer of the church, had been brought to bear upon the minds and hearts of the children and youth that could easily have been collected in Sunday schools during that period,—wherever the eye could turn, from sea to sea, and from shore to shore, the messenger of mercy and grace would now be seen, passing to and fro, binding up the broken-hearted, proclaiming liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Who needs the excitement of wonderful stories, or moving anecdotes, or passionate appeals, to prompt him to cherish and

sustain an enterprise which so clearly involves the highest interests of coming generations?

And yet in the midst of the vast and exciting changes in human affairs in this our day, what wonder is it if men overlook the humble, drudging labors of a band of Sunday school teachers down in the rear basement of some steepled church, with their little groups of children gathered around them, repeating texts of Scripture, singing nursery hymns and receiving the simple and perhaps but poorly expressed instructions of some working man, or woman? To what insignificance all this dwindles in their view by the side of a new project of annexation, or the distribution of high official patronage!

But let the church not forget that by this means she is opening everywhere little perennial fountains, whose rills shall irrigate the garden of the Lord, and whose streams shall make glad the city of God. By this means she may gather up the benevolent, philanthropic teaching power of every neighborhood, and set it in successful operation upon ignorance and vice; which shall collect the tithes and offerings that belong to the Lord, give a tone of warning and encouragement to every hamlet, neighborhood, and individual; whose influence shall leaven the community with the leaven of morality and piety. The Sabbath school is the lattice-work which the church may erect around the great centre piece, and upon which the flowers of immortality may creep up and smile in the revealed light of heaven.

It is the garden of the Lord, where with careful assiduity she may plant the tender scions, and like the faithful husbandman, tend, graft, and prune,

waiting for the early and the latter rain, when the rich fruits shall make glad the wilderness and the solitary place, and cause the desert to blossom abundantly. It is by the mingling of these lights, the confluence of these streams, and the aggregation of these influences, that the intellectual and moral resources of the State are developed, and its safety insured. Such an institution acting on the mind at its most susceptible period, in the most skilful mode, and by the most cogent instrument, must involve an importance whose magnitude can neither be expressed by terms, nor measured by ages. Simple in its method, ample in its means, and lofty in its aims; laying its foundation at the threshold of human intellect, it completes its design in the consummation of man's highest hopes and happiness. And can it be that such an institution was not designed by the great Author of the Christian church? Or can it be that such a duty may be avoided or neglected with impunity? We repeat, the church *must* sustain the Sabbath school; she must do something to arrest the tide of ruin which is sweeping desolatingly through our land, and carrying millions of immortal souls to perdition. She must call into requisition all her resources to illumine the wide and ever-widening dominion of darkness; not only to breast the flooding waves of wickedness, but more than ever to multiply and sustain the agencies for aggressive evangelization, and thus fulfil her great command to "preach the gospel to every creature."

"To falter when the conflict thickens is certain defeat." Not to advance is to go back. Remembering that her "sufficiency is of God," she must

adopt the inspired motto of the Pilgrim sires, "work, *work*, WORK; pray, *pray*, PRAY." "The Christian heart of America thrills with crowding signs of great events, dark and ominous clouds hang round about our national horizon; mournful voices are already beginning to be scattered upon the air. Men, and women too, are predicting evil issues. It may be so. It may be that our experience is to add to the warnings and admonitions of history; that the voice of the past is to sigh through the shattered walls and broken arches of our social fabric. It may be that our sun is to go down in blood; that violence is to rend asunder the chain of our Union, and scatter its links in wild disorder; that our soil is to be drenched with fraternal blood, that the pleasant gardens of our prosperity are to be uprooted by the whirlwinds of anarchy, or iron-bound by the popular frost of despotism. It will be so, if our material civilization is always to keep far in advance of our mental and moral cultivation; if prosperity is to make us selfish, if wealth is to make us hardhearted, if power is to make us tyrannous."

The true elixir which alone can preserve our national life, and after which the philosophy of the nation should seek, will doubtless consist in the correct education of the youth. Here is the salt which will purify and preserve the fountains of our social, civil, and national existence. And our mind reverts at once to the sublime and comprehensive purpose of the American Sunday School Union.

Impressed that not only the security and efficiency of each individual Christian, not only the extension and success of each denominational sect, not only the

glory of the church, but the salvation of the nation is here involved; she has resolved "to plant a Sabbath school wherever there is a population." Her motto is, "Let the banner of the cross go forth, side by side with the flag of our Union, wherever it is carried; let the spirit of God accompany the spirit of liberty in its triumphant march; let the Bible be everywhere on the same shelf with the Constitution; while the tide of emigration is setting for the far West, let the Sabbath school be the advanced guard, the moral pioneer to plant the banner of the cross, and welcome the emigrant to his new home. Let the gospel follow so closely upon the settlers that every tree as it falls may let in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and into every furrow may be cast the seed of the gospel which is the word of God, that the rich and fertile valley may be covered with the yellow harvest of immortal souls to be gathered into the granaries of heaven by Jesus and his holy angels, and God have all the glory; let the tide of intelligence and virtue set with the tide of immigration; let the tree of life and of liberty be planted side by side, and their blessings enjoyed together; let there be no region so remote, no valley so secluded, no wilderness so solitary or desolate, that men shall be able to escape from the visible presence of religion, as manifested in the observance of the Lord's day, and in the most attractive and fascinating of all its forms — the religious instruction of young children. Let this be accomplished, and, depend upon it, the people of this country will have much less to fear for the stability of their institu-

tions, and congress and cabinets will have much less to do to preserve the Union."

Let the republic place God at the helm; let her plant one foot upon the Bible, and the other upon the Magna Charta of human liberty, and say by these two combined will we stand, and upon these two combined shall rest our foundation; — there will then be no longer any doubt that we are "a power on earth;" a power for every purpose of promoting either the welfare of men, or the glory of God.

I maintain that the American republic and American church have a scope of design, and responsibility of duty, which far exceed the elevation and salvation of our own growing myriads, and expanding dominions; that the emancipation and salvation of the *world* are their destined achievements, under God.

An orator recently said, that the American Union with the two oceans for its longitudinal, and the North Pole and the Isthmus of Darien for its latitudinal boundaries, is to realize the loftiest and happiest destiny for itself in civilizing, christianizing, and peopling the American continent, and by its glorious example and influence regenerating the human race. Said Kossuth, "It is the mission of America to give civil freedom and republican liberty to the oppressed and downtrodden of earth." And is it not the mission of the American church to give moral freedom, religious liberty, and Christian institutions to the spiritually benighted and oppressed of earth? Is she not to direct the eye of the nations to the cross, as Evangelist directed Pilgrim, that the burden of

their darkness, guilt, and superstition may fall off, and new celestial visions open before them?

And are not the nations of the earth, awakened by the voice of God echoed from this land of freedom, turning hither their eyes and stretching their arms? And are not all the vicissitudes and indications of Divine Providence drifting in the same direction? The inviting abundance which is here, and the repellant destitution that is abroad, the worn-out soil, oppressive institutions, and powerless religions, which have sickened their devotees to desertion, even to the desertions of their homes, the scenes of their childhood, and graves of their kindred; and the Spirit of God is begetting a Macedonian cry for "help" in the hearts of those who remain; the same providence is raising up a mighty host to respond to their call and fly to their rescue, with Bibles without number, money, or price. Meanwhile he is softening the hearts and relaxing the laws of despots and sovereigns, opening the ponderous gates and throwing down the massive walls of cities and fortifications, that the armies of the Lord may have free access. The open field is now the *world*, and the momentous question arises in reference to universal evangelization.

CHAPTER XXV.

SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.

We remark, the process is *one* which secures and perfects an individual, a religious sect, a political State or nation, and the world; to wit, early education. Train up a child, all children, the *world* in the way it should go, and it will not depart from it. Probably one half of the human race are under sixteen years of age; the future mind of the world is here therefore in its delicate and deciding period, in its forming state; the destiny of the world is soon to be in the hands of these youth; and who will doubt that its condition will depend upon the education which they receive? Suppose these five hundred millions of children could from the dawning of their intellect, before their minds were prepossessed with error, be initiated into the principles, and led to the embrace of the Christian religion, would not the condition of the world be, in a few years, essentially changed?

Suppose that one generation of children could be all religiously instructed and principally converted to God, would not the generation treading on their heels be likely to have their feet turned unto his testimonies?

One generation of Christians would do good to the next, and they to the next. Suppose that three or four generations of children could be trained up with Christian principles and experience, — light shining, bad examples, temptations, and influences proportionally diminishing, — would not this move the earth near to her promised bliss? In the present state of commerce and arts, our nation dwelling between the waters of the North Atlantic and North Pacific, could easily infuse the leaven of righteousness so as to leaven the whole earth.

When shall we become such a nation? There can be but one answer. As soon as ONE GENERATION of children is trained up in the knowledge and fear of God. And those who live to witness the fiftieth anniversary of the American Sunday School Union, will see not only that the measure of the progress of the kingdom of the Redeemer, all over the world, will be very nearly coincident with the measure of its progress in these United States, but that its progress here will be commensurate with the extent and thoroughness of the BIBLE TRAINING OF THE YOUNG.

But, perhaps it will be said that such suppositions are vain, because we have neither men nor means to instruct all the children of the world, or the nation; — this brings us back immediately to the responsibility of the church. There are men and means enough in the American church, if all were consecrated to God and actuated by the spirit of Christ and example of the apostles, to give every child in America a Christian education, and a Bible; and there are children enough in America, if converted to God, to teach every child on the earth. And is not

the great obstacle to *foreign* evangelization to be found in *home* ungodliness?

We may rely upon it that the nations of heathendom will never be enlightened, christianized, and saved without the gospel; and they will never have the gospel until we present it to them; and we shall never present it to them, until we are brought under its lifegiving and sanctifying influence; these positions glow with almost axiomatical evidence. The "isles" must therefore "wait for his law" until the process of home evangelization is further completed; thus the negligence of the church stands in the way of the Almighty in converting the world, and in a measure defeats her only design.

It is a wonderful providence that all the children in the heathen world are accessible to the Christian missionary. It is the testimony of the missionaries, iterated, reiterated, and echoed from all parts of the heathen world, that the children are wonderfully accessible. "To-day almost every child on the earth might be pointed to the Lamb of God," if there were any to say, "Behold him."

To-day all the inhabitants of this great Christian republic might be engaged in carrying and sending the "glad tidings of great joy to all people," establishing schools, seminaries, and churches, and pouring light into the susceptible, infant mind of every nation; and thus preparing for the glorious millennial harvest. And is not this the most effectual method to reach the adults? Is it not the most effectual door to their hearts? And will not an effort here produce a corresponding effect there?

The mushroom in its growth is said to raise the

rock which lies over it, though it may be of several tons weight. The fuel is ignited by applying the match not to the coal or the wood, but to the kindling beneath. And in this single principle, the ductility and impressiveness of the infant mind, and the permanency of its early impressions, we have the fulcrum which Archimedes wanted; and with the word of God for the lever, and the Holy Spirit for the energizing power, the world might be speedily and effectually moved.

Whence has arisen success thus far? Do not statistics show that nine tenths of the efficient members, ministers, and missionaries in the church, were the subjects of early religious culture? And that the preaching of the gospel has proved a partial failure only to the adult community? And have not missionaries stated that "the inducement arising from the reformation and conversion of the adult heathen, would not be sufficient to warrant the labor and expense of the missions, were it not for the hope and success they have with the children?"

Says a report of the Union, "for several years past foreign missionaries have begun to place special reliance on schools for their ultimate success in breaking the dominion of paganism. Their general testimony, in all parts of the heathen world, is that the power of immemorial superstitions and degradations must be broken in childhood, and that the hope of an adequate supply of Christian preachers for the heathen world rests chiefly upon the training of a native ministry.

"Accordingly schools for infants and youth are multiplying at every station, and already exist in all

quarters of the world." Thus the primary object of the missionary enterprise, is the instruction and salvation of the heathen youth. And in cases where the adults return to their vices, prove hypocritical, or rest in formality, the missionary feels that his labor is not lost, but his reward is insured in the salvation of their children.

The missionary enterprise, therefore, in all its departments, has turned attention chiefly to the instruction of the youth. It is a wonderful providence that has removed every obstacle in the way of approach to them. As we remarked of our emigrant population, the same is true of most heathen nations; their most ardent hopes and benevolent desires concentrate upon their children, and though despairing of themselves, they withhold not their offspring from the hand of the philanthropist and reformer.

A wealthy Brahmin, near Benares, India, recently gave up his son into the hands of a missionary with these remarkable words: "I feel convinced after reading your sacred Shasters, that they contain the true religion. I have not the power to come up to the purity of its precepts, but here is my son, take him as your child; feed him at your table, and bring him up a Christian;" at the same time making over to him ten thousand rupees, (five thousand dollars,) to defray the expenses of his son's education.

Mr. Young has suggested a plan for the conversion of the world, which is, that each converted person endeavor to bring one soul to God in the course of one year; and that each new convert be particularly instructed to do likewise, and act thus consistently with his renewed nature.

If but three thousand truly converted Christians, filled with charity divine, and ardently desiring the world's conversion, would consent to act upon this suggestion, — making their selections according to providential intimations, — the result of their labors would very soon astonish the church, and spread peace and salvation through all the world. If but *one half* the number would undertake this plan, and faithfully and perseveringly work it out, its *success*, if *complete*, would double the number annually, and in *twenty years embrace the entire population of the globe.*

Suppose the five millions of evangelical Christians in America were to act upon this plan, a little more than two years would embrace all the population of the Union; and, if the plan were carried out, less than eight years would reach "every human being upon the earth." And what Christian should not undertake to save one soul each year, when Christ, his Redeemer and example, undertook the salvation of the world? And what Christian, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, could not succeed in this plan, especially if he made his efforts in the right direction? What Christian cannot instruct one child unto the kingdom of heaven every year of his life?

Are there not one thousand five hundred persons in the five millions of evangelical Christians in America, who are willing to adopt the plan suggested by Mr. Young? And it is a wonderful truth which we have related, that twenty years would embrace the entire globe! Or, suppose we adopt the other plan of educating our youth, and by them educating the youth of the world. This plan would soon

cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess that the "Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." Perhaps it may be said this is speculation; no, it is logical calculation; but such, I admit, as cannot be realized. We do not expect that America will be christianized in two years, nor the world in seven years.

But suppose it took ten years to convert America, and twenty-five, fifty, or one hundred years to convert the world; would not a plan like this greatly facilitate the work? For thousands of generations like the past would roll away, and still leave the world enshrouded in darkness and palsied in death. If each generation of youth was prepared early to take the succeeding by the hand, lead them up to Mount Calvary and direct their eye to the cross of Christ and the goal of everlasting life, the pathway of humanity would rapidly shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Who could justly estimate the results, if we could leave our noble country, our knowledge, our enterprise, our civil and religious privileges, our steam power and railways and canals, our grasp upon the lightning, our presses, all in the hands of a generation of men whose hearts beat true and loyal to Jesus Christ, and whose rules of thought and action were drawn from the Bible? Is there a portion of our ruined world which would not feel and rejoice in the influence of such a generation? Might we not anticipate during their day, the realization of the prophetic description, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it;

when the everlasting hills shall bow, the valleys be raised, the desert and the dry places gush with waters, the lion and the lamb lie side by side?

There is a remarkable prophecy immediately preceding the universal reign of peace and righteousness, which is, that "all the *children* shall be taught of the Lord," and "all shall know the Lord from the *least* unto the *greatest*."

If we could introduce our youth to Christ, the Captain of their salvation, and let them attend him, step by step, from his baptism to his cross, and until his ascension to heaven, from the Mount of Olives; while they remember him, they will never forget his great command to his followers, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Youths duly taught in the Sunday school, the evidences, doctrines, and precepts of our holy religion, will not be apt to be "tossed about with every wind of doctrine," when they arrive at maturity. They will wage an easier and less dubious warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil. They will love the institutions of the church with a more ardent and permanent affection; and having been schooled in the practice of beneficence, they will support more liberally her benevolent enterprises. Their minds are familiarized with sacred history, biography, geography; with the parables and miracles, doctrines and precepts, prophecies and promises, encouragements and warnings of the inspired volume. As a magician lights a hundred candles at once by a single stroke of his art, as the rising sun with his first ray makes the cold, trickling dew sparkle, so regeneration converts the knowledge of the Sabbath

school child at once into light and a source of pleasure.

Washington Irving has truthfully said, that it is an advantage to a man to be born at the foot of a lofty mountain, or on the banks of a rolling river. His mind will necessarily be expanded by a communion with the sublime scenery around him. What then must be the unspeakable benefits our children will derive from being placed, in their very infancy, at the foot of Calvary, and upon the banks of the river of life, as Sabbath school children are! These youths, when they become converted, can but make better Christians than persons not thus taught. They have become so familiar with the plan of salvation, and its perfect provisions, that they will be less exposed to the fluctuations of unbelief. They will have preëminent qualifications for official relations to the church, and, at the same time, will form permanent and experimentally educated teachers in the Sabbath school. Their acquaintance with the Bible, their superior mental training, and their early piety, will render them able instrumentalities in the work of winning souls to Christ. Their minds have become accustomed to run to the source of light and knowledge, as instinctively as a little child runs to its mother, or the panting hart to the water brooks; that error and fanaticism will find less opportunity for growth; while pure and undefiled religion, exhibited in love to God and man, will more generally prevail.

An educated, but simple and sincere piety, is the demand of the age, and would be the great antagonist to philosophical infidelity. And, in the direction of

our children now sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary, we have a right to look for more perfect exponents of the power of the gospel upon the heart and life. These moral and religious principles become so inwrought into their spiritual natures, having grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, that they will follow them when they have reached mature years, and entered upon the business of life.

This is the field which is to produce the most abundant harvest of Christian charity. Children who have been taught to appreciate the wants of a world lying in wickedness, and been practically connected with the great missionary enterprise, accustomed to the actual working of some of its departments, who have come up with Macedonian cries always sounding in their ears, whose little lips have been taught to pray for the heathen, and to sing, —

"From many an ancient river, —
From many a palmy plain, —
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain:"

this is the host on whom reliance can be placed to push the conquests of the gospel, and extend the kingdom of Christ in the world. Here is to be the great treasure-house of Christianity. Here are the vast, though now unseen resources of the various charities that are to bless the world in future years. Here are the hearts that are to beat high for the salvation of our race. Here are the hands that are to present the gospel to every creature; and here will be found the *treasures*, that are to scatter the leaves of the

tree of life over all lands and all seas; and may we not joyfully anticipate that *soon* the wigwam of the Indian, the kraal of the Hottentot, and mosque of the Mohammedan, shall resound with the praises of the Saviour, and the children of every nation be taught to lisp the blessed name of our adorable Redeemer.

The Sabbath school is already the hope of the nation and of the world; and when those mighty conflicts shall come, that will shake the world and decide her destiny, truth and right will find here a reserved power, a Waterloo reserve, coming up from the four winds, in the strength and discipline of their young manhood, which shall turn the balance scales of the conflict in Zion's favor.

As Wellington stood on the field and held his watch in his hand, toward the close of that fierce struggle, he felt that if the Prussians did not come before six o'clock, he would be compelled to fall back, for his tired and battle-tried men could not stand the fire of the opposing squadrons much longer. But at last, when about to despair, a distant cloud of dust arose far off among the hills, and approached nearer and nearer, till the Prussians burst on the field, and the victory was won. Says one, "While wave after wave of the mighty ocean of literature is rolling across our land, sweeping away our old landmarks, and threatening to deluge society with the mighty torrent of romance and licentiousness, I see riding upon the towering mountain billows the ark of safety — the Sunday school; gathering into its sacred inclosure the youth and children of our land, preserving them from the fearful vortex,

while fast upon the immutable Rock of Ages, unshaken by the storms and surges that war and dash around it, the light-house of truth sends forth its cheering rays to guide the mariners on their voyage. And though the palace of irreligion may tower up in its sullen grandeur, while its halls and roof are filled with the votaries of darkness, chanting their songs of rejoicing, and laughing to scorn the power of their puerile foe; that foe shall quietly and surely with one arm grasp the pillar of ignorance, and with the other that of superstition — for these support the mighty edifice — calling upon God for help, he will put forth his strength: for a moment the towering edifice totters, and then with the crash of thunder falls, and great is the fall thereof.

"But even above the din of the fall, rise for a moment the death-shrieks and wailings of its denizens. Then all is silent, until the gladdened earth takes up the pealing shout of triumph, which, rolling from shore to shore, is caught by the mountain tops, and echoed by the valleys, until the earth is filled with the inspiring chorus: Alleluia! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PERMANENCY AND INFLUENCE OF EARLY INSTRUCTION.

It is said by travellers, that a New Englander's farm or manufactory can be pointed out in any part of the Union, or of the world. They all bear the marks of neatness, thrift, and enterprise. The rogue bears marks which the sciened eye of the police detects at once. It is not less true that Sabbath school children carry the badge of their institution through all the changes and vicissitudes of life, in all departments of business and society, as the poison of a certain land is said to pervade all its productions, even its honey; as a certain kind of food eaten by birds, colors every bone in their bodies.

The instruction which is imparted at the fountain of life, manifests its effects through all the issue. "Early impressions are always the most lasting. All experience conduces to establish this. Who has forgotten the scenes of his boyhood, or the pious instructions of his parents? Who does not carry these with him all along the journey of life? However they may be disregarded and contemned by an abandoned course, yet they cannot be consigned to oblivion. In the darkest hours of revelry, they will

light up the memory and cause remorse. And this feeling will generally, sooner or later, lead to reformation." It may be hidden beneath the rubbish of centuries, error may accumulate mountain high upon it, but, if it exist, it will work and struggle with and finally throw off the superincumbent mass, and flash up like the volcano, revealing its bosom and its power. As Daniel Webster said of the spirit of liberty — "Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time. The ocean may overwhelm it. Mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will brave both the ocean and the land; and at some time or another, in some place or another, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven."

Early education seldom fails, and is never wholly lost; it may be abused; it will not always result in the highest good. Some who have been early trained to piety will live and die sinners, but they will not probably live and die so *great* sinners, as they otherwise would; they will be less liable to fall by temptation, and more likely to rise from a fall. The presiding genius of their early biblical education, will anon in the hour of trial whisper in their confused ears the familiar injunction, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not;" "Blessed is he that endureth temptation;" and to the abandoned profligate it will often present the resolution and example of the prodigal son, — "I will arise and go to my father," accompanied by the gracious promises of reception, even while as yet he is a "great way off;" sinking in the billows of despair, it will refresh his memory

with the promises: "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" thus, like the Psalmist after his fall, he may rise higher and shine brighter than ever before. A bad boy may make a good man, but surely no one calculates upon this result because he was a bad boy; but, upon the other hand, we have reason to look for the fruits of correct early training in a golden harvest of years and of usefulness.

The gratifying testimony was lately given by a teacher of a Lancastrian school of seven hundred pupils, in Edinburgh, that "the children he had received from the infant school, uniformly proved the most satisfactory in intelligence, docility, attainments, obedience, attention, as well as quiet, gentle, and general good conduct."

A superintendent of a Sunday school in North Carolina states, "that of seventy-four connected with that school, who professed to have obtained salvation through Christ, during one year, but one has been known to return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world." The mind converted in youth escapes much that often exceedingly troubles those converted in after years. Their teachable spirits receive the truth in the love of it, and are troubled by no fanatical dogmas or atheistical illusions. There is no time in life when conversion is so apt to be lasting; bad habits have not become fixed like mountains in the path of the Christian, to impede and hinder his upward progress to a world of glory. Knowing that snares are spread all along their pathway, and that they are to wrestle not only "against flesh

and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," and having grown up in their armor and kept it glittering and bright by use, when the contest begins with their three great enemies they will not turn from the narrow way, neither to the right hand nor to the left, — their countenance will not blanch, nor their strength forsake them — clad in the armor of God, — their loins girt about with truth, the breastplate of righteousness and the shield of faith glittering upon them, their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the helmet of salvation upon their heads, and the sword of the spirit in their hands, — their advancing course can be witnessed with exultant joy. A thousand shall fall at the side of such children, and ten thousand at their right hand, but they shall not be dismayed, neither shall defeat nor destruction come nigh them. They have great truths for their armor of assault and defence, which the world cannot match or parry.

Another of very extensive observation has stated, that of all the children converted in Sabbath schools he has never known but one to turn back. The child who reads the "Memoir of Andrew Fuller's Children," will in due time ask for "Andrew Fuller's Life," and the young student of the "Child's Scripture Question Book" will sooner or later value the text-book of the theologian. The effects of an early Christian education will be exhibited by the sailor both in port and upon the sea, in the calm and in the storm; it will place God, even the God of battles, before the soldier in the hour of deadly conflict; it

will be exhibited by the minister in the study, in the parish, and in the pulpit; by the lawyer at the bar, the physician by the death-bed, the merchant at the counter, and the legislator in the capitol; it will remind the judge upon the bench, of a higher tribunal; and the king upon the throne, of the "King of kings."

The effects of early culture and of early neglect are visible through all the strata of human society. Hundreds of footmen and thousands of carriage loads, pass the toll-gates and ferries which lead from Boston, every Sabbath, and more or less from every city and village, who stroll the fields and race the highways for pleasure. Few of them bear the marks of early education; but their Sabbath breaking, profanity, intemperance, and recklessness are competent witnesses against them. And in the multitudes of children which throng the roads and public thoroughfares in the vicinity of the cities, we may generally point out the Sunday school scholar if he is there. The same is true of the children and youth in the cities; were we to enter on the Sabbath evening and inquire for the meeting of the "Young Men's Christian Association," or "Union," or where some distinguished lecturer is to speak, it is easy to determine of what young men to inquire with any hope of obtaining information. There are many localities, gatherings, groups, and personal appearances, which are utterly ignorant of all religious teachers, and of all religious meetings; though they may be familiar with every haunt of vice in the city, — the "mark of the beast" is upon them.

And we repeat, that while later instruction falls oft by the way-side, on stony places, and among

thorns, that it is choked and becomes unfruitful, early instruction is never *wholly lost;* its light will flash amid the greatest darkness; its voice will be heard amid the greatest silence or the greatest din, and echo along their pathway in threatenings, commands, and promises, and result in reformation. As the memory of childhood is retentive, and its conscience impressive, as God is almighty, as his truth is omnipotent, and his promises cannot fail, we are encouraged here as in no other sphere of labor, to cast our bread upon the waters.

We have remarked, that the subjects of early culture and early neglect will carry their respective marks with them to the grave. And why will not the same badges of distinction characterize them forever, even as they walk in the processions of eternity? One class is said to bear the mark of the beast in their foreheads and in their hands,—the other, the seal of God upon their brow, and in their hands a white stone, with a new name written thereon. Let this motive, drawn from eternity, be kept constantly in view.

Permit me near the close of this chapter, to suggest the inquiry, do we really, as the church of God, individually and collectively, desire the salvation of the world? Do we sympathize with the Divine Redeemer in the tears he shed over its desolations? Are we tremblingly alive to the great interests of his kingdom, and willing to live and act in direct reference to its sublime and glorious consummation? Must not reformation begin, then, in our own hearts? Let the fire first be kindled there; let the stamp be

prepared in our own bosoms, then we are ready to make the impression upon others.

And have we not a primary work to do in our own families? Let us offer up to the gracious heavens our own children in the arms of our prayers and faith, giving neither sleep to our eyes nor slumber to our eyelids until God accepts the sacrifice; and then they will stand by us as examples to corroborate our precepts; our light may then be seen, and our influence felt in the societies to which we are attached, the denomination to which we belong.

We are then prepared, upon the great principles of union, to coöperate with all Christian denominations and Christian efforts, and to adopt the language of inspiration, — "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Thus the nation may be influenced by our example, and he who holds it in the hollow of his hand may be moved by our prayers. And the individual who takes the position most effectually to secure his own personal blessings, takes the position most effectually to bless the world. We should seek not only to enter in at the strait gate, but to make the *world's* redemption a prominent theme of high and holy converse, bringing all our capabilities to bear in this direction; let us, therefore, henceforth, in the Christian and lofty sense, live for the world, making its conversion the high and lofty aim of our being; and as we rise heavenward, leave no sinner

to sink forever, whom our eager hands may grapple, or our capacious arms may carry.

Should we not study the ways of living on small means, that we may thus be able to contribute largely to the cause of benevolence? Should we not be willing to retrench all that is possible of our expenses in building large and extravagant houses, dispensing with costly furniture, with servants, horses, carriages, and useless animals? We should economize in clothing, food, ornaments, useless books, hurtful drugs, beverages, and vain amusements; in expensive travelling and dangerous speculation. We may save much in *time;* an hour redeemed from sleep each evening and morning, would amount to a month each year; many of us might be more industrious, and *all* more generous, and give a much larger percentage of the bounties of providence. Let us save the pence, the hours, the fragments; let us save the little in the thousand and one ways in which we *may* save; this will all conduce to our health and happiness; and these little rills will swell the stream of our benevolence, and greatly enlarge the aggregate of our contributions to the Lord. Six and a quarter cents is the average of a dinner in the United States. We have five millions of evangelical Christians; if all would deny themselves a single dinner in a year, the amount saved would be three hundred and twelve thousand dollars in a year; which is much more money than has been raised any year for the American Board of Missions since its existence.

Hon. Samuel Hubbard once asked, "What friend of missions has ever denied himself one single dinner for the cause?"

If each Christian would deny himself one dinner a month, (and fasting is a divine command,) nearly four millions would be saved annually; whilst their physical, intellectual, and spiritual vigor would be enhanced by the abstinence; at least, the evil done to the evangelical community would not be so great as the want of four millions of dollars. But while we eat three hundred and sixty-five dinners unmolested, more inhabitants die than the whole of united America. Since Christ died, fifty-five generations of heathen have died; allowing thirty-three years to a generation, and six hundred millions of heathen, (the number which now exist,) thirty-three billions have thronged the gates of death without Moses or the prophets. If the ten millions of sincere Christians in the world were to save from their tables, wardrobes, amusements, from all the departments of their expenditures combined, one cent a day upon an average, it would amount to the vast sum of thirty-six millions of dollars annually; sufficient to liquidate the debts, fill the treasuries of the Lord, and send the needed thousands of missionaries to garner the fields ripe and ripening for the harvest. And what Christian cannot save one cent a day? While some may not be able, others might more than make up the deficiency.

How long a time would be required to convert America if Christianity kept pace with enterprise, commerce, literature, and science; and our piety were commensurate with the privileges and blessings we enjoy? We colonize the vast deserts of the West with our enterprising emigrants. The sun is ever gilding some portion of our territory. Our can-

vas is swelling on every sea; and our manufactures are sold in every market. "No wind but fills our sails." "No sea but wets our keels." No harvest of wealth but is reaped by our labor. No golden fleece but is sought for by our daring and skilful adventurers. Our name is a shield of protection in almost every land; and our influence affords access to nearly all the tribes of men. We are said to be a people who "talk, walk, make love, and marry in a hurry. We eat, drink, sleep, die, and are buried in a hurry," doing every thing on the high-pressure principle. In reference to the steam-engine it was said by a Hindoo, "The English are very cunning; we Hindoo catch horse, ox, elephant, water, wind, and make him all work, but they catch fire and make him work too." Suppose that Christians were thus in earnest; "that the children of light were as wise as the children of this world," how long would it take to bring the millennium? And why should they not be? Why should there not be the same enthusiasm and energy among Christians in working the mines of mind on the Atlantic slope and along the Mississippi valley, which actuate hundreds of thousands to work the mines of gold on the Pacific coast, and the valley of the Sacramento? As nothing is achieved in politics, arts, science, commerce, domestic economy, or personal religion, independently of system, it is essential, so far as human agency is concerned, to act according to method, — to some specific system of benevolence; and a portion of each day should be set apart to pray for the conversion of the world; we should also live a life of self-denial and cross-bearing, of holiness and consecra-

tion to God; that our prayers may be heard, our gifts accepted, and our efforts crowned with success. Let us seek for the celestial baptism of holy zeal, Christian enterprise, and moral heroism, that shall make us men and women of the beatitudes, pronouncing blessings, blessings upon all around, — especially upon the meek, the merciful, and the pure in heart. In what other way can we show our attachment to the Saviour, and our desire for the salvation of the world? In what other way can we be "living epistles known and read of all men?"

In what other way can we "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts," "walk worthy" of our "vocation," "redeem the time," "feed the sheep, and carry the lambs in our bosoms," "lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven," "fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life?" "Efforts for the conversion of mankind, even when systematized, do not interfere with the sovereignty of God. There is no arbitrary disposal of events, or of the gifts of the Spirit, which preclude a rational employment of means for the conversion of the world; he has connected means with ends, through all the departments of his government, both in nature and grace. There is no *natural* event in which his own agency is not concerned. He has not built the creation like a vast machine, that will go alone without his further care. He has not retired from the universe to let it work of itself; but exercises over it a universal superintendence and control; and yet every event in nature has been brought about by means."

The established connection between the use of appropriate means and the result, or between cause

and effect, is of the most encouraging nature to vigorous and persevering efforts to bring sinners to God. All things, and God at the head of all things, are beckoning the church onward with holy and magnanimous zeal toward the mark of the prize of her high calling, to wit, the world's redemption,—whilst the *atonement of Christ* leads to expect this sublime consummation,—being ample in its provision. *The character of Christianity* leads us to expect the conversion of the world,—being perfectly adapted to this end.

The success which has already attended legitimate and well-directed efforts, encourages us to expect the conversion of the world. The gospel is the divinely appointed instrument of salvation; and wherever it has faithfully been made known, it has never failed to meet the case of its sincere recipients, whatever may have been the culture of their minds, the strength of their prejudices, the enormity of their sins, the depth of their degradation, or the peculiarities of their customs and creeds. It has met and overcome every form of opposition, and gained its trophies in all grades of society, and among all classes of men. It has achieved victories among Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Jews, Pagans, Mohammedans, princes, peasants, bondmen, freemen, philosophers, barbarians, and in fact from individuals of all nations, conditions, and crimes. And these victories have been no less benign than decisive; they have been victories over all that pollutes, degrades, and ruins, in behalf of all that exalts, purifies, and saves; subduing the understanding to truth, the habits to rectitude, the heart to happiness. We are thus fur-

nished with specimens of the gospel's power; we have received in these converts the first-fruits of the world's harvest; and as a sheaf of many golden ears, the church may wave them before the Lord, and regard them as an earnest that the whole harvest will in due time be gathered in.

The plain declarations of Scripture lead us to believe that, —

> "Christ shall reign on Zion's hill,
> And all the earth with glory fill."

For instance: Is the kingdom of Christ compared to "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands?" That stone is to break in pieces every opposing power, and "fill the whole earth." Is it said to resemble leaven? That leaven is to diffuse itself until every part shall be brought under its influence. Is Christ said to be the seed of Abraham? In that seed "all the families of the earth are to be blessed." Is he the King of Zion? He is to "speak peace to the heathen; and his dominion is to be from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth." Is he the King of kings and Lord of lords? "All kings are to fall before him, and all nations are to worship him." Is he the Son of God? The Father has promised to give him "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Has he received a name which is above every name? "Unto the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and of things under the earth, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Is it life eternal to

know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea;" and "All shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest."

The *attributes of God*, also, which render him both able, willing, and desirous of converting the world, make this result certain; also, the *omnipotence of truth*, — the inevitable success which must ultimately attend the right.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PROVIDENTIAL INDICATIONS OF THE MILLENNIUM.

THE intimations of Divine Providence lead us to expect the sublime consummation of the world's conversion. Every man who has acquainted himself with the world's history during the last fifty years, must know that in that period it has undergone a vast change, very favorable to the conversion of the whole race of man. The laudable efforts of the British, Foreign, and American Bible Societies, have succeeded in arousing the nations, and exciting among them a spirit of inquiry relative to religious truth. The most intelligent among the heathen tribes are manifestly perplexed and disgusted with the principles and rites of paganism. Copies of the Holy Scriptures are nearly everywhere anxiously desired, and eagerly pursued; and heart thrilling voices from almost every part of the unchristianized world, imploring spiritual help, are reiterated in the ears of the directors of missionary societies.

A voice from the four winds proclaims the no distant downfall of Paganism. It speaks of the "crumbling of idol temples," "colleges of Hindoo learning deserted," "general abatement of prejudice against Christianity," "the gradually increasing influence of missions and respect for missionaries." "Six thou-

sand eight hundred natives have been converted through the Church Missionary Society in one year, and there is every prospect that India will, perhaps, in a single generation, renounce idolatry." Indeed, writes one, "the feeling is becoming general among the people of the East, that some extraordinary change is at hand, which is to be effected through the diffusion of Christianity." And well may they look for such an event, when they see so much that is ominous in the signs of the times; in the neglect of rites and ceremonies essential to their idolatrous systems; in the division and schisms among their priests, as in the fierce conflicts recently carried on in Bombay and Calcutta; in the conversion to Christianity of not a few of their priests; in the public discussion, as in Calcutta, where mighty champions for the truth and for the demolition of Brahminism have been raised up from the people themselves; in the many newspapers and periodicals, both for and against Christianity, published in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, and in the already wide diffusion of Christian and European learning.

In the sacred city of Benares, among the gorgeous monuments of idolatry, stands a remarkable shaft, which is reputed once to have towered to the very clouds, but has been gradually sinking for many years. This the Hindoos regard as an index to their waning and sinking religion. When the shaft shall have sunk to the surface, and mother earth shall close in upon it, Hindooism shall be no more.

Within a little more than a quarter of a century, Providence has cast down nearly all the barriers of access to the most benighted nations. British cu-

pidity has been so overruled as to open the door for the gospel into India and China, containing half the population of the globe. A flourishing republic has been founded on the shores of the darkest continent that exists. Papal dynasties, whose power was employed to persecute and hinder the work of Protestant missions, have been overthrown. New channels of access to the Asiatic nations are opening on the Pacific. The whole current of God's providence is sweeping nations away, and forming others like *deltas* from the rubbish of those which have perished, — is bearing the world forward on its bosom to the glorious consummation of prophecy and promise. Are not all these changes the foreshadowing of past revolutions in religious opinions, hereditary customs, and cherished prejudices? "Why will not the analogies of Providence warrant the hope, that the same impulses which have actuated the people of Europe to discard oppression and cast off the shackles of civil and religious despotism, may pervade the heathen nations, — as surely, if not as suddenly, upheaving the foundations of idolatry, breaking the bonds of *caste*, and emancipating the world from its bondage to superstition? Europe, and all the eastern nations are in commotion, waking from the slumber of centuries; the nightmare of popery and paganism is passing away.

"Revolutions, sufficient in number and importance to fill the pages of the world's history for a century, have been crowded into a twelvemonth. The crash of falling dynasties has echoed from every shore. Crowns and coronets have fallen thick as meteors in the November 'shower of stars.' Thrones

of tyranny have fallen without a visible foe. Despotic power has melted before popular rights. Absolutism in church and State has received its death-blow. Freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of the press — in other words, the liberty of being *men* and *Christians*, and of making others such, — these have been the watchwords of revolution, — the incentives to heroic and successful struggles with despotism. Though there may be many reverses, may we not adopt the expressive language of Robert Hall, 'the empire of darkness and of despotism has been smitten with a stroke that has sounded through the universe.' When we see whole kingdoms, after reposing for centuries on the lap of their rulers, start from their slumbers, the dignity of man rising up from depression, and tyrants trembling on their thrones, who can remain entirely indifferent or fail to turn his eyes to a theatre so august and extraordinary? These are a kind of throes and struggles of nature to which it would be a sullenness to refuse our sympathy. Old foundations are breaking up; new edifices are rearing."

> "From the heart of all nations
> There is coming a wondrous music."
>
> "Brighter scenes before us,
> Are opening every hour."

Opinion is, under heaven, become the *arbiter of nations*. Power is despoiled of its mystified incidents and prerogatives. The spell of long established systems, of hereditary orders, is broken; the whole world is moving on from the quiet inaction of the one, to the active and restless excitability of the

other condition. The world, the whole world, is heaving, and the entire mass of population throughout not only the civilized, but the uncivilized portions of the globe, seems to be like the opening mouth of ignorant hunger, demanding something, it knows not what. An outburst of the native mind seems at hand. "Villages are coming in constantly, casting away their idols, and giving up their temples, to be used as Christian churches. The crescent of Mohammed already turns pale; and a strange irrepressible restlessness in Italy and other papal countries, predicts some great change in great Babylon. Even in the Vatican, prelates and cardinals, and the trembling Pope, have visions of threatening tempests, of disaster and trouble, from whence there is no escape; while they read upon their statistics a diminution of their clergy, amounting to near nine hundred thousand within the last fifty years."

Says an intelligent missionary, "the feeling is becoming general that some extraordinary change is at hand, which is to be effected by the diffusion of Christianity." "The great work of redemption is approaching a *crisis*. The lines of Providence seem fast converging to some great point of consummation. Great events thicken upon us. Events which were wont to occupy centuries, are now crowded into less decades of years. The wheels of Providence run swift and high, far outstripping in their magnificent consummations any thing that a few years ago imagination could conceive, or faith realize. We now see the whole world in motion, animated by a common soul; and that soul is Providence. All is gloriously moving forward to a destined point;

and that point the next great step of advancement in the sublime economy of grace. The Pagan world is shaken to its very centre, — its temples crumbling, its idols falling, its darkness dissipating, and, as never before, it is prepared to receive the gospel. The spirit of life is passing over the face of the stagnant Christianity of the East, and preparing those lapsed and corrupt churches once more to arise and let their light shine. And there is discovered, too, a shaking among the dry bones of Israel, a spirit of renovation and life, betokening the long night of their dispersion and affliction to be nearly passed, and the day of their redemption at hand."

Forty years ago there was in India no church, no Sabbath, no chaplaincies, no mercantile house closed on the Sabbath. "English residents were as much strangers to the gospel as the Hindoos or Mohammedans." But now not a mercantile house is open on the Sabbath. Instead of a "universal, unblushing disregard of religion," there are scattered over India, in its length and breadth, delightful specimens of piety. "Christianity has its *monuments* in every Pagan country. It has *transformed character*, morally, socially, politically."

In past ages of the church, the prayers of God's people went up, that the Great Master would grant access to the unevangelized nations, and raise up and qualify men for the work. Those prayers have been heard. The world lies in a ready, in a beseeching posture, at the feet of the children of the Highest.

The present movement in China will, without doubt, result in the Christian civilization of that

mighty empire; and the war in the East will be but the hammer of providence, by which God will break in pieces the powers of oppression; — thus the great Husbandman is blasting out the rocks, and tearing up the roots of despotism and superstition. The ploughshare of the Almighty is casting up furrows for the heavenly seed; and the providential facilities for the rapid diffusion of the gospel are remarkably favorable. It should be remembered, that the world is not half as large as it was a quarter of a century ago, and that ocean steamers, and the press, and the telegraph, and commercial and missionary operations, afford facilities for making the pulsations of the heart of the world felt at the extremities, with amazing rapidity.

When a superintending Providence would convey his messengers throughout the Roman world, he provided, as never before, *facilities* of *conveyance.* But not the provinces of the Roman empire, but the nations and kingdoms of the *whole earth* are brought into juxtaposition by means of improved modes of conveyance. Nations are no longer alienated by formidable distances, or unknown seas. There is scarcely a tribe on the surface of the globe, which is not easily accessible to those who hold in their hands the everlasting gospel. A voyage around the world, a visit to the remotest islands of the Pacific, is but an enterprise of a few months. Do philanthropists of different nations wish to meet for mutual consultation? Do Christians of every clime desire to mingle their councils? Such a meeting is practicable. A world's convention may be quickly and easily convened. "Home and foreign missions have,

therefore, struck hands on the Pacific. Bible and tract operations have girdled the globe." And how beautiful in the light of the cross, is the sisterhood of charities, each in her sphere seeking to proclaim Christ and him crucified to the sinning and sorrowing of every realm; Bible societies, spreading the inspired word, in every latitude and every language, exalting savage tribes into nations, and transforming their talk into written language, — one of whose publishing establishments produces an average of a Bible and Testament for every minute in the year, — missionary societies, gathering churches, providing pastors, and laying broad and deep foundations for civil and religious institutions, — tract societies, filling the air with the "leaves of the tree of life," giving feet and wings to the gospel, that it may run and fly to every realm, and convey to every abode the elements of civilization, republicanism, and Christianity, whose publishing houses are vast arsenals, whence the soldiers of the cross are supplied with weapons for their holy warfare, suited to every emergency, whose messengers are speeding their way and telling the story of the cross in every abode, — and the Sabbath school, which is pioneering the way and carrying these agencies to all the generations of the youth: all actuated by one spirit and aiming at one object, — the glory of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls.

It is stated that six million copies of Bibles and Testaments have been circulated in France since the battle of Waterloo, and all other European nations have shared proportionably. And this is the great leveller which is upturning and overturning this

wicked, distracted world, and preparing it for a complete civil and religious renovation. "The steamboat, the rail-car, and the telegraph, and cheap printing and cheap postage, enable good men and good institutions, in connection with the Bible, to more than double their efficiency, and to concentrate the labors and the influence of a century into a brief generation. If steam has facilitated the process by which half the continent has become border land, and created an almost interminable frontier, it has also made a highway by its thousands of miles of railroads, and other means of rapid intercommunication, for missionaries, colporteurs, books, and Bibles. And, as if steam were not prompt enough to answer the demands of the age, not swift enough to execute the ripening purposes of Providence, magnetism is made to yield its secret to American genius, — annihilating space, and bringing the extremes of a continent into a fraternal neighborhood."

The Hudson and the Mississippi flow side by side. The waves of the Northern lakes wash the shores of the Gulf of Mexico; "deep answereth unto deep," — the Pacific to the Atlantic. Add this to the intense employment of the scientific mind of the world in new discoveries, and the immediate application of the results to the useful arts, — the prodigious improvements, especially in all that pertains to the art of printing, so that impressions can be taken with tenfold rapidity, and with corresponding cheapness; reducing the price of the Bible from an equivalent to a year's toil of a laboring man a few centuries ago, to the value of a few hours' work in our day. Contrast the period in our history, not a century and a

half ago, when a single newspaper, the size of a letter sheet, with a total circulation of three hundred, served for a continent, with the enterprise and wide reaching influence of a daily journal of our own times. Compare the prediction of one now living, that "the time *might* come when this country would sustain a *religious* newspaper," with the prosperous condition of a hundred periodicals, devoted to religious intelligence, — a single religious journal (the American Messenger) having a circulation of a hundred thousand, *exceeding one half of all the secular papers* issued in this country at the time this prediction was uttered! The whole number of newspapers in this country in 1810, was three hundred and fifty, with an average circulation of less than eight hundred.

It may truly be said of enterprise, science, and benevolence, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." The stupid worldling may not see these wonders; the believer in chance may marvel; the blasphemer may "mock on;" and the sceptic feel that the world is dark and growing darker. But as in the natural night, when the darkness begins to thicken, the faithful watchmen having long kept their vigils, are preparing to cry, — "*The morning cometh;*" so the Evangelist witnesses all these providential developments, as having a momentous evangelical import, as he reads, "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth." "The kings of Tarshish and of the *isles* shall bring presents." "To Him shall be given the *gold of Sheba.*" "And let the whole earth be filled with His glory."

The eye of faith sees every providential event since the fall of man, as an index, overruled by the same divine sovereignty, and pointing forward to the same glorious consummation; all the great men who have been raised up since Adam, as joining hands and reaching forward to the millennium; every means and gift of light and grace, as contributing to the one great purpose of him who has said, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Nor does this conviction produce no emotion. There are multitudes who are associating the gospel with *all* for whom it was designed; remembering Christ on the one hand, and the world he came to save on the other; looking on the white, waving fields, listening to the Macedonian cry for help, and to the commandment of heaven that has gone forth to thrust in the sickle, with eye and heart and soul, every fibre of their being pervaded with these things, are proceeding to make the conquest of the world. There are more than seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the Baal of worldly ambition, nor sacrificed to the Moloch of earthly riches. If patriotism or baser motives call forth their thousands to the field of battle, there are thousands who, from motives of benevolence and philanthropy, are responding to the rallying cry for recruits in the army of evangelization.

God is thus collecting and arranging all things to witness to his Word. He is in the pyramids of Egypt, in the ruins of Pompeii, in the laboratories of science, in literature, in poetry, calling up new heralds of his glory; and by and by the whole earth shall be covered with ten thousand times ten thou-

sand witnesses from every realm, school, kingdom, and science, who, Baptist like, shall point while they preach, "Behold the Lamb." It is true, to the casual observer comparatively little appears to have been done toward the world's conversion; but they must recollect, "that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation," but "as a thief in the night," as the lightning which flashes "from one end of heaven to the other."

The tree may bud and blossom in full vigor, while the worm is cutting off fibre after fibre and root after root on his way to the tap root, where a single stroke will cause every leaf to wither in an hour. The army may be years in marshalling, marching, and preparing, but a single day or hour may achieve the victory. The besieging army may labor for years at the foundation of the fortress, and no visible achievement be apparent; none may have been wounded in its towers, and the walls seem to stand as firm as ever; but a single stroke brings them with a crash to the ground, that the victorious hosts rush in upon the astonished and defenceless garrison.

Thus it is with revolution, political and religious; ages may feel and increasingly loathe the chains that bind them; generations may struggle for liberty, clamoring for their rights in the ear of monarch after monarch, parliament after parliament, and thundering with blow after blow at the door of an arbitrary State or bigoted church. Martyr after martyr, age after age, generation after generation may set the seal of their allegiance to the great and true principle by the sacrifice of their lives. But at length the crisis comes, — providence is ripe, — the majestic march of reform

reaches the goal, — the pent up fires break out in resistless conflagration, — the monarch is beheaded, — the throne overturned, and the government changed. Thus the events of ages occur in a year, the development of generations are perfected in a day. So in building the temple, many men and many years were employed in selecting the materials from the rude quarries, the distant mines, the deep waves and dense forests, bringing them together and preparing them for the building, that after many years of labor, little had apparently been accomplished; but lo! a brief space builds the temple "without so much as the sound of a hammer, or axe, or any tool of iron upon it." And shall not the tabernacle of God at last be set up upon the earth in the same way? It is to be wrought out of materials selected and brought together by the ever-busy hand of Providence, from every system, organization, form of government, and religion which ever existed. And the thousands of years which are passed have been filled up in preparation; not a change or a revolution has transpired which was not tributary to the one great purpose. The hand of God was all this time busy in well-directed efforts, — not an abortive movement, not a mistake, not a retrograde motion did he make. All was onward, and onward, as rapidly as the nature of the work permitted. "Times and seasons" were with him, and he worked without "let or hinderance," overruling and controlling all things, — learning, skill, inventions, improvements, discoveries, governments, all human activity, so that their tendencies were made, in an unwonted manner, to subserve the work of the world's salvation. A busy and all-con-

trolling Providence was preparing the ground for centuries, sowing the seed, watering it with heavenly dew, warming it with the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and employing laborers in his vineyard, all in reference to the day when the harvest of the earth should ripen; he was preparing the seal with which to stamp his impress and superscription on the kingdoms of the earth.

There are doubtless instrumentalities enough at work already to bring the millennium, when each shall have accomplished its own work. And why may we not suppose that this will be done about the same time? That the Bible Society, Missionary (home and foreign), Tract, Temperance, Peace, and Abolition Societies, the various literary, benevolent, moral, and religious societies will all accomplish the work they have undertaken, about the same time? It is worthy of consideration, that the principal agencies for the world's conversion arose about the *same time*, and have progressed nearly equally; and again, while these agencies are planted everywhere, and are at work everywhere, they are all at work at the *same time*, — one does not wait for another; the missionary cause does not wait for the Sabbath school, nor the Sabbath school for the Bible, nor the Bible for the temperance or peace societies; neither does the work stand still in one *place* till it is accomplished in another; and as neighboring flames brighten each other's blaze, so these various instrumentalities and localities mutually react and corroborate each other, and like signal fires kindled at the same time, they may flash up simultaneously; or,

like the spokes of a wheel, all start together, and the "earth bring forth at once."

All things work, and work together, at the same time, and to the same result; and all are tributaries of the great river of salvation, which help to swell and accelerate its course, fulfilling the work of God's spirit, providence, and grace, and simultaneously accomplishing all his purposes, that he shall "come *suddenly* to his temple," — "*cutting short* the work in righteousness." He has but to speak as in the beginning, to create a "new heavens and a new earth," — calling light out of darkness, life from death, and formation from chaos. And to show that "he who shall come, *will* come, and will not *tarry*," he has referred us to the efficient, moving cause; *the day of his power*, wherein his people shall be made "willing," even from the "womb of the morning." "His holy arm made bare in the eyes of all the nations." "His spirit poured out upon all flesh." "The glory of the Lord revealed, that all flesh shall see it together." And the "windows of heaven" opened, that there is not "room enough to contain" the blessing.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MISSION OF AMERICA, CALIFORNIA, AND THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

WHILST these achievements are to be wrought in both hemispheres, upon the islands of the ocean, and in all parts of the earth, the most brilliant victories are to be won in America. She is, without doubt, designated by Divine Providence to exert a paramount influence among the nations of the earth, to take a leading part in building the walls of Zion, and diffusing the light of Christian civilization throughout the world. She is to be like a city set upon a hill; like the angel in the Apocalypse, which John beheld flying in the midst of heaven, she has the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation and people and kindred and tongue; — with the freest faith, and the freest government on the earth, — with scope for the exercise of all her powers, and exhibition of all her excellences. And it is this conviction, that America is designated to give civil and religious freedom, social elevation and republican government to the world, that plants a thorn in the pillow of every despot's head upon the earth.

The American republic is distinguished from all others in the fact, that it possesses the element of

individual liberty. With past republics, the liberty and interest of the *individual* were unthought of; man was purely for the State; but here the reverse is true,— the State is for the individual, and for his liberty and interest. With most monarchies and republics, politics, religion, reform, enterprise, are all chained to the pillars of the State, and but follow the wheels of its triumphal chariot; here the State but follows in *their* wake.

"As yet, the censor and the police-man give a doubtful phase to the constitutional right of a free press, in the dominions of Popery. Established hierarchies have fettered, and may for ages cramp the free and elastic spirit of Christianity, and prescribe the forms of its manifestation in the Protestant monarchies of Europe; the persecuting spirit of Mohammedan nations may shut out all hope of saving this generation of the followers of the false prophet; while difficult, barbarous languages, and idolatrous customs may long baffle the missionary in Pagan lands; but here, Christianity is unshackled, and she may walk forth in her own native strength, dispensing salvation in the palace and log cabin; to the mountaineer in his secluded home, or the traveller on the crowded steamboat; to the emigrant on the wharf, or the western boatman on his craft; the child at his play, or the aged man on his death-bed; to one, to all,— "to barbarian, Scythian, bond and free."

In one direction an "El Dorado" of a million square miles of new territory glitters with gold to the eye of enterprise, and lures from the homes of the whole earth the avaricious adventurer; here you

may preach the gospel of the kingdom to the representatives of "all the world, for a witness unto all nations."

Here, as on the occasion of Pentecost, are dwelling "men out of every nation under heaven," and are prepared to hear, "every man in his own tongue, the wonderful works of God;" giving us the opportunity of evangelizing them at our own doors; and they may go everywhere preaching the word, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will."

The eighty thousand from China, and the proportionate representatives of every benighted empire, kingdom, and tribe, with the blessing of God may carry the gospel to their own dark climes, and strike an effective blow at the universal heart of heathenism. Here cities spring up as by magic, and throwing off their swaddlingclothes, assume at once an importance that rivals the crowded marts of the old world. Here is doubless soon to be the great centre, metropolis, and landing-place of the world.

The seven hundred and fifty millions of India and China lie within a few days' sail; and it is not extravagant to anticipate that, at no distant day, an uninterrupted line of communication by steamboat and railroad, will be established between the Eastern and Western worlds; the Atlantic and Pacific coast, by way of Australia, Polynesia, the Indian Archipelago, and the Valley of the Mississippi; and thus the whole earth be encompassed by a settled channel of civilized, peaceful, Christian intercourse. And the Pacific shore is to be the half-way place in the

highway of nations, where "deep will answer unto deep," — the Pacific to the Atlantic, — San Francisco will respond to Honolulu, and Honolulu to Canton, and Canton to Calcutta, and Calcutta to London, and London to New York, and New York to San Francisco, through the valley of the great West. Thus the voice of enterprise and Christian civilization shall echo round the globe. And here is to be one of the chief points of radiation and divergence, whose influence will affect the world, — the nations of the East and of the West.

From the Pacific shore light is to go forth in pencillings of power and beauty; travelling far up the splendid rivers of China, enlightening the islands of Japan, flashing through the realm of benighted India, and throwing its divine influence over the darkness and shadow of death that hangs so heavy there.

And the steam navigation may work a mighty change in the moral, social, and political condition of the nations of the far East; their commerce will seek the marts of our far western ports, and find its outlets through the channels formed by American enterprise across our continent. These remote nations will be brought into neighborhoods, and will be made acquainted with one another's advantages and disadvantages, virtues and vices, and thus remove a thousand prejudices and superstitions, and make many tribes of rude barbarians ashamed of their ignorance and barbarism, and resolve to imitate their improved neighbors.

Thus, by this agency, a mighty change will be wrought on the *habits* of the benighted nations of the East. The paddle-wheels of improvement, and

the terrific puffs of the fire and smoke of reform, will break up the stagnant waters of the sluggish nations from Constantinople to Japan. It will infuse a spirit of enterprise; a promptness in business habits; an idea of the power of true science; and show the practicability and vast advantages to a nation of progressive improvement, which nothing before has ever done. It becomes a ready medium for the interchange of ideas. "The Chinese and American will there meet on common ground, and talk of government, of science, and religion. They may weigh the merits of their respective systems; compare practical results as exhibited in the character of their respective nations, and deduce a motive for improvement. It will afford, too, every needed facility for the conveyance of the agents of philanthropy and benevolence to every nation on earth."

"Anglo-Saxon civilization will spread along the Pacific, building cities, founding colleges, schools, and churches, setting up printing-presses, making railroads, and propelling steam-ships." And one has asked, "may it not be, that the causes which have thronged the Atlantic States with European immigrants, may crowd the Pacific shores with the teeming population of the Asiatic nations? And as Germany, France, and Ireland have been leavened, in a measure, with republican and evangelical principles, and will be in a greater degree by the reflex influence of their immigration; so, may it not be that China, India, and even Japan, shall receive missionaries, in due time, from the converts among their native emigrants to the American coast?" Whilst many of our ships are floating temples, freighted

with holy influences; and the members of our Seaman's Bethel Societies are constantly visiting and revisiting all the open and opening ports of these heathen nations to sanction the Christian religion. Thus it may be the design of God to make the commerce of the world tributary to the conversion of the world; and from this new and unexpected quarter, to turn the flank of heathenism; to assail the kingdom of darkness, with all these advantages of contiguity and facilities of intercourse. San Francisco, in becoming the world's exchange, may become a great centre of missionary operations for the South American republics, the islands of the sea, and the Asiatic nations, — the great "maritime depot" of the army of evangelization. One has said, "Would you convert China and Japan? Go, sanctify your own Pacific shore. Cut up the roots of popery and infidelity there. Strive manfully to arrest and overcome the evil at the beginning, upon that spot."

In another direction, in this country, is the Mississippi valley, — the great compeer and copartner of California in the Christian civilization of the earth; lying in the heart of the nation, and centre of the world; with one of the longest rivers on the earth, gathering the waters of the Arctic regions, and rolling majestically away to the ocean, swelled by tributaries sufficient to reach three times around the globe; with an area of four and a quarter millions of square miles, capable of sustaining, if populated as densely as some parts of the world, nearly two thirds as many inhabitants as now dwell upon the earth; affording a field for enterprise and adventure,

and scope for every human power, such as no other portion of the earth's surface offers. Possessing soil, climate, agricultural, commercial, political, and moral advantages which are unequalled on the earth; and augmenting in population, influence, and interest, with a rapidity unprecedented in the history of the world. Toward this vast valley the eye of emigration is fully turned, and its unebbing tide is setting in a whelming flood, bearing in its great dragnet "paupers and princes, ignorant boors and university professors, street rag-pickers and high-minded, intelligent farmers; Jesuits, priests, and republican reformers; Rationalists and Papists, Jews and Christians, — indiscriminately mingled, diversified in national, religious, social, and industrial institutions and habits." This is the great receptacle of the countless currents of influence and power, which result from four hundred thousand different minds and bodies, who annually land upon our wharves, with this valley for their destination. As we have remarked, the hand which transferred the sceptre of civilization and the crown of knowledge from the banks of the Nile and the Euphrates, is bearing them onward to the valley of the Mississippi. There can be but little doubt that the fulcrum of the earth is to be here; that an influence will proceed from this valley, which will decide the destiny not only of this republic, but of the *world*. And what institutions shall be planted here? What influences shall the emigrant meet here? What shall be the growing character of this community, and what the ultimate decision which this valley shall make for humanity?

These are problems for the solution of the Ameri-

can church; and problems the most weighty that were ever committed to man. Shall degraded heathenism or Puritan Christianity triumph? Shall Roman Catholicism, or vital godliness prevail? The traditions of men, or the precepts of the Deity? Shall republicanism elevate and bless, or oppression degrade and blight the future inhabitants of this mighty valley? Shall it be an Elysium or a Pandemonium? Let the action of America and of the American church be the response.

This is the commanding position which the American republic occupies among the nations of the earth; and the Mississippi valley and California are the arms which she reaches eastward and westward, and invites the nations long, long bowed by oppression, degraded by superstition, and crushed by the iron heel of tyranny, to come, — and let them come, — let them bury their manacles by their kindred dust, or rather about the sepulchres of their oppressors; or coming hence in their bonds and shrouds, and looking up to the goddess of Liberty, let their chains fall off beneath their feet; touched by the wand of our free and Christian institutions, let them be *free!* let them be *Christians!* Breathing vital air, let them survive! Let the oppressed and persecuted of all nations find an asylum beneath the generous banyan tree of American liberty; let them feel that they are exalted in their position, with conceptions of their rights, with perceptions of their privileges and capacities that will enable each one to walk forth in the midst of us and say, "*I, also, am a man!*" truth and liberty were kept in store for me.

Said the president of Williams College, "Let us

have such a ministry as we need, controlling the religious press, and modifying, to some extent, the secular press; let the myriads of tracts and volumes from the presses of this society be spread over the land, accompanied by the living voice of sympathy and love, and we have nothing to fear. Then may we safely welcome the immigrant, whatever his creed. Then no priestly power and no jesuitical subtlety can prevent the potent influence of light and of love from reaching his mind. Then, having secured the foundations of our own free institutions, we would not wait for the immigrant to come; we would go to him. With such a preparation of those coming, with such a preparation here, the single individual settling among us would assimilate himself to us, as the snow-flake melts into the ocean; and even these aggregations, so zealously held together, would be but icebergs coming down into a warmer region. They would gradually melt away, till there should be substantial unity among our people, and the blessing of rational liberty and of a pure and spiritual Christianity would be put, under the smiles of God, beyond the reach of danger."

Already the influences flowing from our institutions are such as to reveal the following thrilling fact. According to the Metropolitan Catholic Almanac, published annually, there were one million seven hundred thousand Catholics who left Europe for America during the seven years from 1846 to 1853. At the expiration of this time, it being the time to reckon them up in the Catholic churches in America, only six hundred thousand of them could be found. The other eleven hundred thousand had so far re-

nounced their Romanism, that they did not report themselves here in the Catholic registry. And I scarcely need remark, that there is no institution so potent for American evangelization, as the American Sunday School Union; with its thousands of organized schools, and its tens of thousands of zealous teachers and scholars, its Bibles, books, and periodicals; its missionaries, colporteurs, and agents; its orthodox faith, its catholic spirit, its early, zealous, and untiring efforts, actuated by motives the most benevolent and sublime; lighted by past experience, and encouraged by the confidence, respect, and co-operation of the wise and good, with the *world* for the *field* of its operations.

As I am addressing the church, and would impress her with her momentous responsibility, I will state my conviction, that while America is to decide the destiny of the world, while the Mississippi valley is to decide the destiny of America, and the Sabbath school is to decide the destiny of the Mississippi valley, the church is to decide the destiny of the Sabbath school.

A *world* of responsibility, therefore, rests upon the Christian church. And she is thus called upon by the voice of the world to renew and redouble her efforts, especially through this instrumentality and in this direction; to *educate*, and *now* to educate, *every child* in that realm; to move forward to the valley of decision with all her heavenly enginery, and proceed to lay there the foundations of eternal truth, upon which all these heterogeneous materials may finally settle, and be prepared, with united hand, to take hold of the pillars of the world that lieth in

wickedness. If the inhabitants of this vast valley were dependent on the waters of the river for their daily household wants, the process, cheapest and most successful, by which this mighty tide could be cleansed from all impure admixtures, could be applied at the *source* of the river, rather than to station expensive and complicated machinery or vast hydraulic engines at intervals down the stream, for the purposes of arrest and filtration. The good sense and experience of the inhabitants would forbid that millions of dollars should be freely given to establish and maintain the works on the river bank at St. Louis or New Orleans, while only ten are given to enlarge and give effect to the simple and noiseless process which cleanses the fountains. It would rather lead them to expend larger sums, and erect more efficient machinery at the *birthplace* of the "Father of Waters." By the same process must that *society* be purified. But put into the hands of the Western children and youth the keys of the treasuries of infinite wisdom and knowledge, connecting with the communication of human science, the inculcation of those precious truths which enlighten, sanctify, and save the soul; and, in dependence on God's blessing, we will be responsible, that neither popery nor infidelity shall reign there; no tide of desolation shall roll back through this valley, sweeping away *Bibles, tracts, missionary societies, and Sabbath schools* in its overwhelming torrent; but God will pour down upon these rich and beautiful vales and prairies the radiance of his glory, in ten thousand times ten thousand streams; so that the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light

of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days. One has asked, "Are Christians ready?" Are there supplies of *men*, — teachers, preachers, and colporteurs; of weapons, — tracts, books, and Bibles; of *money*, — the widows' mites and the rich men's thousands; of *graces*, — faith, courage, zeal, patience, prayer. Are Christians ready for an answer to their daily prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth?" Did ever such responsibility rest upon the Christian church? Were there ever such momentous issues pending upon human action? Was there ever a generation or an organization over whom there needed such an incubation of the spirit of the Most High, and around whom there required such a "wall of fire?"

Alexander, when about to enter into a great encounter, said to his army, "Wherever I go, whatever I do, it seems to me that I am the object of the world's gaze, that the eyes of the whole creation are upon me." And let every Christian feel that he acts before the eyes of the universe.

The American Church stands in a time and place where the converging rays of all past responsibility unite, and the diverging rays of all future responsibility separate; where she gathers up the wisdom and experience of all the generations since Adam, and sends out the most mighty influence for salvation or ruin, from this time forth to the final catastrophe of the world. Thus all the circumstances, demands, and possibilities of time are arrayed about her; and the circumference of her contact and influence embraces all mankind. There is not a point to which she can go forth from the centre, where, upon

this periphery of influence, she will not come into immediate collision with an immense amount of mind and action, influence and error, darkness and desire, in multitudes that are lying in regions round about and beyond. "Ay; the field is the world, and the field is open." "The whole creation" is standing and waiting for the Church to move. There lies the land, and the proclamation is sounding forth that we are well able to go up and possess it. There seems silence on earth and in heaven. The sun is standing still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, that the armies of the living God may without interruption make the conquest of the world.

"Yonder sky was never before spread over a scene like that of this world now, at the noon of the nineteenth century; — an open field, — a world-wide arena, — doors great and effectual, — scope for holy ambition, such as Paul and Luther never saw, — a chance for Christian enterprise, unprecedented in the history of time, — the golden age of evangelical competency, — the moment, when the brilliant star of hope is hanging directly in the zenith, — the hour of all time's eventful ages, when a Christian hero would wish to live and act, — the sublimest, divinest epoch, wherein one of Christ's chosen ones may breathe music more delicious than ever human voices uttered, and which vibrating through heaven shall awaken, amid immortal years, a delight so full and glorious as shall attract the love of angels and of God."

This is a world of all others which the Son of God redeemed with blood; this is the age selected from all ages to be the season of his highest triumph

and reward; — and this the spot and time, among all worlds and periods, most interesting to the eyes of Heaven. To exist in such a day, is a privilege which kings and prophets desired, but were not permitted to enjoy. If ever the Christian church had whole generations of work upon her hands, it is at the present time; and if ever she was "a flame of fire," this is the time to exhibit herself such. She stands under an opening heaven and by the tomb of a world rising from death, — let her not be stupid or half awake in such a day. Let her soul stand erect, looking out for the approaching God. Let every nerve be strung to action. Great is the human effort which the day calls for; great will be the triumph which faith and patience will achieve. It is but "a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry."

Let the church bring all her capabilities to bear upon the accomplishment of the important and momentous work before her. Has she talents at her command? In this work let them be efficiently employed. Has she influence? In this work let it be diligently exerted. Has she zeal? In this work let it ardently burn. Has she devotion? Let it ascend as incense before the throne of God. Has she wealth? Let it be liberally expended. For the performance of this duty "humanity is entreating, and Christianity is exhorting, importuning, and commanding. The case is urgent; for sinners are perishing, — perishing while you are reading, perishing by thousands, perishing within the reach of help, perishing in your city, and at your doors. Therefore go out quickly, and what you do, do at once, do with

all your might, do in spite of all opposition." Loud as seven thunders, the voice of God is sounding above the roar of the waves of civil and religious commotion, and "the tumult of the people" for might and for right, calling upon the Christian church to arise and *act*, to act for her own *honor, and for the glory of Christ her King;* to act for *America;* for the sake of all that is precious in her institutions, civil and religious, and all that is powerful in her influence through the earth; to act for the sake of a perishing *world;* for the nations and regions of oppression, superstition, and degradation. "Voices from above and beneath call us to arise and be doing. The living and the dead call us. The past and the future, our country and our God call us." All the bells of time and eternity are ringing to summon us to action, and the heavens bend impatient over the issue. The Spirit says come, and let the bride say come, "and let him that heareth say come." "Arise, shine." "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway." Lend, lend a hand, to kindle the signal fires! Thrust, thrust in the sickle and reap, for the "harvest of the earth is ripe."

CHAPTER XXIX.

UNITED EFFORT.

UNION is the law of the universe; from the Creator Supreme to the remotest and minutest of his creation. It is by the union of various attributes, natural and moral, that the Deity exists and governs the universe. It is by the union of Father, Son, and Spirit that the glorious work of creation, grace, and redemption is accomplished. It is by the union of the centrifugal and centripetal forces in nature that the planets are held in their orbits, and their sublime motion upon their axis is preserved, — making the "music of the spheres." It is by the union of the stars, each shedding its ray, that "the heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth his handiwork, and night unto night showeth forth knowledge of him." The union of the elements of light and heat, air and water, produces and perfects the vegetable and animal kingdoms.

The light which gives sight, and the atmosphere which gives breath to the world, are constituted by the union of minute particles. The same cause, too, gives the sea its mighty power to toss fleets and navies from wave to wave, and shake the earth with its roar. Communities are but combinations of fam-

ilies. The glorious rainbow in the heavens is composed of all the colors in nature. It is by the union of men, minds, and means, that the great achievements are performed in the world of business, science, and politics. One man cannot perform the business of a firm or corporation; he has neither strength, money, nor talent. One family cannot constitute a school or college or society of reform. No one denomination is adequate to the work of converting the world. One cannot gather materials from the forest, mine, and quarry, and cut, mould, hew, and construct the house; a thousand hands have joined in every building. A few officers cannot administer the principles of government, but many functionaries are required. It is *allied* armies that do the work of destruction or defence. Satan undertook no revolt in heaven until he had secured to his aid a third of the celestial host.

It is not one providence, but a combined series, that perfects individuals, communities, and nations. It is by the mutual and harmonious coöperation of all the members of the human body and faculties of the soul, that man can answer the purpose of his existence, and exhibit his fearful and wonderful creation. The body is one, yet hath it many members. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee; or if it does, it is likely to find its need of such an appendage to carry it where it may employ its superior skill, or to bear it away from the difficulties this presumptuous spirit occasions. The eye cannot say to the hand, because you are not an eye, you are not of the body.

The mingling of all the varied colors, in the petals

of flowers, in the garniture of insects and plumage of birds, in the rose, the jasper, and the cheek of youth, in the clouds and stars, makes the beauty of the world. Only the joint action of all the wheels, levers, and axles of a complicated machinery can develop its full power.

The kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace combine their influence as one. Unity of purpose, plan, and power run through all the realm of creation. Heaven itself is composed of angels and archangels, cherubim, seraphim, and saints redeemed from every nation, kingdom, and people, with the triune God in the midst, as their centre of attraction and source of bliss; and the rainbow about the throne is composed of all the varied colors in the moral universe, which are emitted from the Creator, and reflected from the creation.

Thus union is the law of the universe. Especially should the Christian church be united. Here we see a design higher than the dome of the skies, deeper than the foundations of the earth, and wider than the bounds of creation, — and yet characterized by unity. "The church of Christ is *one*," — one in respect to its head. As a flock all Christians have one shepherd; as an army one captain; as sinners saved, they trust in one Saviour; as a building, they have one corner-stone; as a body, they recognize one head. The church is one in respect to the Bible; they all draw their principles from the identical revelation. It is one in respect to saving faith; they all fall into the same arms, trust in the same grace, plant their feet upon the same rock; one and the same link unites them to the great source of life and

salvation. So the church of Christ is one in essential doctrine generally; that is, in the doctrine which is essential to salvation. It is one in *baptism*, in its initiatory and symbolical character. One in prayer; they a l pray and praise from the same divine forms. One in hope, in fear, and in *love;* here kindred flames are kindled at the same altar, emit the same glorious brilliancy, and tower upward toward the same God and the same heaven. The church is one in hatred, — all hating what God hates; one in suffering, — mingling sympathetic tears; one in joy, one in object and effort; one in character, design, relation, duty, and destiny.

Thus the church is *one*, — originally, essentially, and eternally. It has been represented by the idea of a "magnificent chandelier, suspended high up in the heavens. Here are the seven golden candlesticks, shining with the true effulgence of the Eternal Spirit. Next to these are the candlesticks of all patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, radiating their fires amid the glories of the upper world. Then extending far down, this chandelier spreads its branches widely over the surface of our globe, presenting innumerable branches to all the sons of men, that every man may find a candlestick upon which to put his candle, and thus contribute his share to the illumination of the world. When this chandelier shall be filled, it will be drawn up on high, and there blend its light with the radiance of the throne of God."

In the first age of the church, there were no such sects as Lutherans and Calvinists and Wesleyans; no such names as Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian, and Baptist. Agreement

in *fundamentals* was the only doctrinal unity which was then demanded, and the united band of Christ's disciples, assembled around the same table, declared by their actions, "We, being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." It was undissembled *brotherly love*, that invested the example of the early Christians with an almost moral omnipotence, which the adversaries of the cross could neither gainsay nor resist. Surrounding observers admired the delightful spirit of unity which then existed in the church, and were led to exclaim, "See how these Christians love one another!" There is a *meaning* in the phrase, "*Communion of Saints*," which they in some measure comprehended. True some were for Paul, some for Apollos, and some for Cephas, as if Christ were divided; but Paul declared that to be a mark of their carnality. Scarcely had the apostles ascended to heaven, and cast their glittering crowns at the feet of their Lord, before schisms arose in the church, and spread from one end of the Christian world to the other; many followed men more than Christ, and forgetting they were Christians, thought they were Lutherans, Wesleyans, and Hopkinsians; and now we find in the church universal, divisions and subdivisions almost numberless.

If we take a view of Christendom, we see *discord* among the professed followers of the Prince of Peace; the dearest brotherhood sundered, religion disgraced, and the Saviour wounded in the house of his friends. We see the Mohammedan pointing the finger of scorn at the divisions among Christians; Papists exulting on account of them, and boasting of their own

union; infidels scoffing at the party spirit which prevails in the bosom of the church;—all tauntingly exclaiming, "Settle your *differences*, and then invite us to embrace truths in which you are agreed." Since the body has grown and developed its members, there has been great warring among the members; Ephraim has envied Judah, and Judah has vexed Ephraim.

Thus the church has been rent by her own suicidal hand, and distracted by internal divisions, that the cause of the Redeemer has often lain prostrate and bleeding at every pore. Well might the immortal Whitefield exclaim, "O how do I long to see bigotry and party zeal taken away, and all the Lord's servants more knit together! Would that all names among the saints of God were swallowed up in that one of Christian." "Thousands," says Baxter, "have been drawn to Popery, and confirmed in it, by the divisions of Protestants." One of the reasons assigned for the apostasy of Julian is, that when he saw the dissensions of Christians and their rancor against each other, he took refuge from their brawls in the dead unity of Paganism. A want of Christian union destroys that sympathy and community of interest, which ought ever to distinguish the followers of Jesus. It weakens their hands, hinders their prayers, prevents the impartial spread of the Bible, hardens the irreligious, supplies infidels with objections, retards the spiritual conquests of Christianity and the renovation of the world. A want of Union has long given Popery high vantage-ground against Protestantism, has long paralyzed the nerves of the church, and been sucking up her very lifeblood.

"Sectarian light puts out Christian fire." Yet how many bigots there are who consider their own as the only true church, and denounce all others as the synagogues of Satan; who will do nothing for enlightening the world unless the candle can be carried on their own candlestick, nor labor side by side with any but those who do homage to the particular *shibboleth* of their party.

We read of an apostle saying unto Christ, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not." The language of bigots in all ages in regard to him, who belongs not to their particular party, has been, "*He followeth not us;*" "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou;" "We are the people, and wisdom shall die with us." Christ's words are a plain and pointed rebuke to the indulgence of such a spirit: "He that is not for us, is against us, and he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad." It is said, when Archimedes wished to drive a hostile fleet from port, he accomplished his purpose with a single lens, by gathering the sun's rays, and throwing the focus upon the ships; soon there was consternation on the deep, — billows of fire, smoke, and water commingling, and the fleet was routed and destroyed. But how often do Christian denominations exert themselves to burn up one another, and labor with an unholy rivalry to throw the focus of their influence, and expend their energies upon each other, instead of employing them against the common foe Said Robert Hall, "Christian societies, regarding each other with the jealousies of rival empires; each

aiming to raise itself on the ruins of all others, and scarcely deigning to acknowledge the possibility of salvation out of their pale, is the odious and disgusting spectacle which modern Christianity presents."

The church is comparatively powerless so long as it remains incrusted in sectarian rigidness, or stiffened in the folds of formalism. So long as a stagnant faith holds her mighty elements spellbound, or the ice of selfishness chains her healing waters, her nature, power, and efficiency are lost. If the members of a church, like the radii of a wheel, are nearer to each other as they approach the centre, then their strength depends on their union with each other in their common centre. Separation from Christ is alienation among the members, and alienation among the members is separation from Christ. The way to think alike in every thing, or to come to an entire coincidence of views and actions upon subordinate matters, is to seek to be powerfully united upon fundamental truths, and tolerant and largely charitable upon unessential things. One has said, "in order to peace and union, let not the church insist on exact coincidence of views and actions in all subordinate matters. These are grounds and questions upon which good men may differ, and have a right to differ. Hence the room and necessity for charity. It is all wrong to hazard the well-being of the soul, to jeopardize great public interests, for the sake of advancing the interests of a sect. Men must learn to practise some self-denial, on Christian principles, in respect to their denominational prejudices, as well as in respect to other

things, before pure religion can ever gain a complete victory over every form of human selfishness. In this country the rights of all sects are the same, and any denomination that would have its own rights respected, must respect the rights of others. The difficulties of home evangelization are undoubtedly enhanced by the *spirit of sect*, and the diversity of creeds among evangelical Christians. The family of Christ is divided into more than twenty separate bands, all of whom professedly hold the head, and are agreed in the great fundamental articles of Christian faith. Many of these differ only as to the question of psalms and hymns for public worship, or on some point of church order or policy of church extension, or in respect to the philosophy rather than the facts of religion. These differences would present no essential drawback, perhaps, to the great cause of evangelization, and might even contribute to its advancement, if they were only subordinated to the greater matters of agreement, and were not obtruded as the occasions of bitter controversy. But when the champions of a particular creed assume that it alone contains the truth, impeaching the motives, and questioning the purity of sister communions having equally the seal of divine approval, and bearing their part in the work of the world's conversion; and when such onsets are made upon fellow builders of the temple, that the trowel of Christian industry must be dropped for the sword of Christian polemics, so that the enemy is allowed to triumph; or when denominational ambition courts the places crowded already with churches of kindred evangelical faith, to the neglect of the waste places

where souls are perishing for the want of their efforts, — then sectarianism belies the gospel it professes to honor, and rather embarrasses than promotes the work of evangelization. Every such exhibition of partisan zeal strengthens infidelity in its unbelief, rivets the fetters of superstition on the followers of the man of sin, and hardens the hearts of a scoffing world. Yet so wide spread is this evil, that it extends to the habitual ministrations of hundreds of unlettered preachers, and is not yet banished from the pulpits or presses of leading and cultivated communions. The result is, that among thousands of the less informed classes, more is known of controversial than of practical theology. Men will often discuss with much heat the questions in dispute between their own and some sister church, while poorly able to explain the way of salvation to an inquiring sinner.

Another result is the feeble and distracted state of churches, and the half-starved condition of the ministry in new settlements. "The churches in this region," writes a colporteur at the West, "have for some time been rent by divisions and dissensions; some have become extinct; others have seemed on the point of annihilation. Spiritual declension has abounded, fatal error has increased in many places, and there has evidently been a great defection in morals. The ministry has not been as well sustained formerly, and in some places public worship is as wholly neglected. Emigrants carry their prejudices, if not their piety, with them. And unless they can find or establish a church of their own peculiar stamp, often give their support to none. Hence the

multiplication of feeble churches in a community scarcely able to support a single church, instead of uniting in the establishment of a common Christianity, where Christians are few and sin abounds."

"I believe," says a western man, "there are ministers enough in the valley of the Mississippi to constitute a tolerable supply. But as it is, even in the *State of Illinois*, not more than one fourth of the people have any thing like a regular preached gospel." O for the promised day when the watchmen on the walls of Zion shall see eye to eye, and when every soldier of the cross shall employ the sword of the Spirit in the conflict with the powers of darkness, instead of using it in fratricidal warfare! Then will one of the greatest hindrances to the evangelization of the country and the world be removed, and the great heart of Christianity will beat in sympathy with the heart of Christ in the work of redemption. Then will the foes of Zion be silenced, the Man of Sin receive his death-blow, and every system of error see written upon the walls of its palaces, in letters of living light, "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin!*" Then will be given new lustre to the Christian character, new energy to the church's efforts, and new prevalence to her prayers.

Two equal forces coming in contact mutually destroy each other; but corroborating each other their union is strength. Not only do neighboring flames brighten each other's blaze, but even dying embers upon the hearth, by being brought into mutual contact, rekindle the expiring spark. How indispensable, therefore, that all who truly love Jesus Christ, seek for the balm of union, that the wounds

which deface his body may be healed, and the rent fragments of his garment be again woven into a web of holiness and beauty; having given themselves first to the Lord, that they give themselves to each other; casting aside their theological wranglings, and with a holy emulation strive to see who shall most resemble in life and in spirit, Him after whose name they have been called; that they "go to the waters of charity and wash from their foreheads the name *sectarian*, and inscribe there CHRISTIAN;" abjuring all bigotry, let them encircle in the arms of their affection every true child of God, and without regard to denominational distinction, receive one another, even as Christ has "received them, to the glory of the Father;" regarding each Christian and Christian sect, as the property of the whole church. Let them greet each other with the kiss of affection, having for their motto "in essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity," — neutral in *nothing*, but liberal in *all things*. Says a modern writer, "The only unity that will ever be attained before the resurrection of the just will be the *unity of thinking differently in love*." And doubtless this is true so far as the belief in minor points of Christian doctrine is concerned. The age has gone by when the free soul will submit to be trammelled and fettered, or forced to the exact measure of other men's opinions, or stretched on the iron bedstead of Procrustes.

We should rejoice in the advancement of any sect "built upon the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone." We should fain plant ourselves on a platform long enough and broad enough to hold all who love our Lord and Saviour

in sincerity; whatever they believe, if they embrace no fundamental error; whatever they reject, if they discard no essential truth, we should extend to them not only the "right hand," but the *right heart* of Christian *fellowship*. Let them stand by our side, we with them and they with us, for blessed, yea, thrice blessed are all those who can agree in the one thing needful!

> "Not by a party's narrow banks confined,
> Not by a sameness of opinion joined;
> But cemented by the Redeemer's blood,
> And bound together in the heart of God."

It is not our badge upon his shoulder, but Christ's image on his soul; it is not believing in Christ's warrant for any ecclesiastical polity, but it is believing in Christ himself; it is not his dwelling in our tabernacle, but it is the spirit of God dwelling in him that makes him a Christian indeed. Compared with these great realities, how insignificant the points in which believers disagree!

"The sincere though mistaken believer, whose heart has been renewed by divine grace, whose motives and intentions are pure, and whose life is consistent, though clinging to some errors, is loved more by the Lord, and should be by us, than he who is perfectly correct in theory, while incorrect in practice. God tolerates such a man, then why should not we? Said Robert Hall, 'The man that is good enough for Jesus Christ is good enough for me!' All true believers should therefore extend to each other the hand of friendship and love, remembering that if at times they part on the road to heaven, they will

ultimately meet, and surround together the same great white throne, and in accordant strains of loudest songs, extol that matchless grace, which translated them from the trials of earth to the felicities of heaven." We may rejoice more over the discovery of a single unessential idea, than over ninety-nine fundamental principles; we may isolate ourselves each upon our own glass pedestals, and stand as monuments of selfishness; man may live in a single element, develop a single faculty and cherish "one idea," till he becomes essentially a unit, which is next to a blank; he may carry the sword in one hand and the olive-branch of peace in the other, but the sword being foremost, may wound more than the balm can heal. We may be dazzled by our own glowworm spark, so that the world appears to have no effulgence but what is reflected from us; we may have no attraction but the attraction of repulsion; we may love ourselves with all our hearts and strength, generously devoting but the remainder to our worthy neighbors; we may wear the strait-jacket of bigotry and egotism, which utterly forbids all growth or enlargement, until we become so narrow-minded and contracted in our views, that we can pray for no other denomination, rejoice at the prosperity of none, sympathize with none, fellowship none; we may wrap the threadbare folds of sectarianism around and around our meagre persons, and think nothing is done or *can* be done aright out of *our* ranks; but these circumscribed views will hold us in the lowest sphere of Christianity, they will lead us through the deep valleys and ravines, that we shall fail of the delightful prospects which the elevated walks of

Christian benevolence afford. A small object held before the eye will shut out the glories of a blazing world.

We should not, as was said of Burke, give to party what was meant for mankind; but denominational preferences should be held at abeyance to those great principles which are of infinitely more importance. The proper catholic and denominational feelings are not incompatible, they are of one genus and species, one necessarily including the other. And while every honest man must be denominational, having a preference for the views which he has embraced, which he teaches in his family and Sabbath school, and which he wishes to circulate rather than any others, where the facilities for circulating all are equal; yet he who has the mind of Christ will eschew the sectarian spirit. As the pure rays of white light which God has sent forth to cheer the heart of man, and exhibit the beauty and loveliness of nature, can be divided by refraction into rays of various hues, so have men divided the church of God into different sects; but it is only a sickly vision that can rejoice exclusively in a colored light. The foundations of the New Jerusalem are laid not upon *one* precious stone, but upon *twelve*. They are not all jasper, they are not all sapphire, or emerald, or topaz, — but they are all precious, and together form the foundation.

The names upon Aaron's girdle were twelve, but they were all sainted names, and combined to adorn the prophet. Christians should seek more than for silver, that lucid order which turns the labyrinth into a plain path; that arrangement which intergrades the

multitudinous fractions into one system, even as cunning artificers taught the cedars of Lebanon, the stones of Tabor, and the gold of Ophir, — parts into parts reciprocally shot, — to harmonize, in perfecting the holy and beautiful house on Mount Zion.

CHAPTER XXX.

UNION SABBATH SCHOOLS.

If there is any department of Christian labor in which the various branches of the church should co-operate, it is the Sabbath school instruction of the young. Men may differ as to the best method of suppressing intemperance, some contending for legal and some for moral suasion; they may not agree as to whether Congregationalism or Presbyterianism is best adapted to the West, but *here* is a cause in which all can meet and mingle in sweet accord.

The Bible, it is acknowledged by all, is the science to be taught; youth the season, and the Sabbath school institution has the suffrage of consenting Christendom. While, therefore, each church and denomination has a school of its own, and each State, organizations for the joint action of their respective denominations, there should be an organization like the American Sunday School Union, for the sympathy and mutual coöperation of all the States, denominations, and churches, that the influence of each may be felt not only at home, but throughout the land. And such are the condition, character, and peculiarities of the population of many of our

new States and territories, that an institution of this kind is adapted, far beyond any other, to accomplish good. It is vain here to attempt to start with the parish, the church edifice, and the settled ministry; before such results can be reached, a most important preliminary work is to be accomplished. The people must first be visited, — a religious interest must be awakened, and they must be brought to feel that they have many things in common before they will unite and act together as a parish or congregation. To meet just such a condition of things, this society was originated, and it is found to furnish every facility for the work; it has been affirmed that every thing which is essential to the accomplishment of the great object to which the Christian world has lately been turning its attention, is embraced in the plans and teachings of this institution. It is so economical as not to be burdensome, — so catholic in its spirit as to harmonize the feelings and opinions of the people; and so practical and efficient as to commend itself to the judgment of those among whom it operates. Under its various colors blended in one, it launches in all directions its life-boats upon the boundless ocean of society, succors the wrecked and picks up the sinking among all.

There are thousands of neighborhoods composed of persons belonging to the various evangelical sects, where there are not enough of either to compose a society or school. There can be but one school; shall it be a Methodist, or Baptist, or Presbyterian, or shall it be a Union school? If it is to be a Union school, the whole population will be secured; neither denomination will be willing to be behind the rest in

the enterprise; and those not connected with any church will send their children to be instructed in the word of God, who would be unwilling to have them instructed in the peculiarities of any one of these denominations. If it is a Union school, it is for a common good, and the community will feel a common interest in it. In such an enterprise, there can be no conflict of interests, unless it be a conflict between light and darkness, philanthropy and selfishness, religion and irreligion. If they refuse to coöperate, and each makes the attempt singly, experience proves, that they will often all fail, whilst their sectarian teachers are treated as the evil spirits treated certain exorcists in the times of the apostles; "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are ye?" Thus their lights flicker in their sockets till one after another is extinguished, and the place is enveloped in utter darkness; whereas, had they all labored together to promote the knowledge of God upon the basis of these great fundamental doctrines of the Union, they might have had a large and flourishing church, that would have been a blessing to themselves, their children, and the whole settlement. They might all have succeeded, and by helping each other help themselves. In process of time those sects who combine their efforts will crystallize each around its own centre, and the result prove what might seem contrary to philosophy, that each part was larger than the whole. And the question, which denomination shall gain most strength by the success, depends upon influences and circumstances which the school neither originates nor can control.

The characteristic feature and central aim of this

institution is to teach the truth that Christ taught, and as plainly as he taught it; to unite in promoting the essential and leading truths of the Christian system, on which the people of God, without distinction of denominations, have relied, and do now rely, as the body and essence of their faith and hope, restricted in nothing except the promulgation of such human dogmas as have been the prolific source of controversy, persecution, and scepticism, from the days of the apostles until now. Union upon the fundamental principles of the Bible is its watchword. It lays the foundation, and rears the superstructure, but leaves each denomination to decorate with such improvements, adorn with such coloring, and enlarge with such acquisitions as they may see fit; with true sublimity in its mottoes, "Unity in diversity, concord in contrariety." Thus it is a union in partition with many seeming bodies, but one soul.

The helm of this institution is guided by the combined wisdom, experience, and piety of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Reformed Dutch, Congregationalists, etc.; gentlemen still maintaining their relation to their several churches, approving and loving the peculiar forms of government and faith received by their own communions, but yet heartily uniting in securing the widest circulation for the simple and vital doctrines of the Gospel; no one making any compromise of principle, or yielding the right to maintain his private views, but only waiving that right for the time being, for the purpose of promoting a greater common good. They lay off their colored, denominational spectacles, and look at

each other through a purer and more natural medium, saying, —

> "There is a heart within this hand, my brother,
> Come place your hand in mine,
> And let an echo from my heart
> Be answered back from thine."

It is the pleasure and duty of each denomination to regard the religious education of its own children; but shall they, in the prosecution of this object, deny their assistance to those efforts which seek to extend fundamental truths on principles that can alone reach the mass of population? Will any one say that the general knowledge of the Bible, and of the first and essential doctrines of faith, shall not be taught to millions of immortal souls, unless it is accompanied with every particle of his own creed, and under the direct authority of his own church? Will the principle be defended, that we ought not to go into the villages and neighborhoods where there are no churches or schools, and form a Sunday school where the Bible shall be diligently read, and their attendants shall learn their duties to God and man, and be urged to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, — that this shall not be done, because of the few pious and intelligent teachers who are to be found in the settlement, one is a Baptist, another an Episcopalian, a third a Methodist, a fourth a Presbyterian or Moravian or Lutheran? Is this a fact that is to exclude religious teaching from that population, until each of these denominations successively gains strength enough, in the course of many years,

to have a church and Sunday school of its own? Will the children wait in childhood, and death abate its claim, and eternity suspend its alternative, until this shall be effected? Would Christians thus situated be justifiable in withholding, on such grounds, their coöperation in promoting religious truth? And will Christians refuse their countenance to all that can be done to supply this acknowledged deficiency, because every thing cannot be done that in other circumstances might be done?

The experience of thirty years shows the American Sunday School Union to possess every facility for reaching and blessing the entire population of the country; such has been its success, that it is affirmed of a very large portion of the active, intelligent piety of the West, that it was conceived and matured in these schools?

"A large proportion of the pious young men in our Western colleges," writes an agent in Indiana, "were converted in a Sunday school. Several of the most useful ministers now laboring in this State, were converts in the schools established seventeen years ago by the Union. Several useful missionaries, now in foreign lands, ascribe their conversion to the same origin."

Viewed in its proper light, this institution will be regarded as one of the mightiest organizations in existence for the evangelization of the nation. If "one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight," if by a twofold augment a tenfold power is gained, what shall be the force of a combination like this?

"The dewdrop on the infant plant
Has warped the giant oak forever;"

and if this is a fit illustration of the tenderness of the infant mind, and of the mighty and permanent effect of early influences, what destinies must this mighty engine control; whose prerogative is to watch the dawn of little thoughts, to guide their first developments, to instruct and invite, lure and lead the rising generations in a heavenward course, whilst its reflex influences draw after it parents and friends, the middle-aged and the old. The bow of hope, with which it spans the heavens, composed of various colors, but blended in one arch of light, is destined to overspread and cheer the nation; this stream will rise, like a swelling flood, until it overflows the whole land with blessings, and bears its freight of joy to the darkest corners of the earth.

Here, doubtless, originated the American Tract Society, which is diffusing its common Christianity, spread out on seventy thousand pages, in fourteen hundred different publications, selected for their standard merit, by a committee from six bodies of Christians, from the writings of more than a dozen communions, and circulated by colporteurs connected with fifteen different evangelical denominations. And all this without infringing on denominational independence, or sacrificing a single truth intelligently regarded as having any vital relation to the salvation of the sinner, or the edification of the believer.

These and kindred institutions are giving a mighty

centripetal tendency to Protestantism and to the age; and the pious mind contemplates them with intense satisfaction, as suited to attract the great Christian family nearer to each other and to Christ, and hasten the glorious era, when

> "*One song employs all nations;*
> The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
> Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
> From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
> Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
> Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

We hail the day which has given us being, — a day which exhibits the Christian world in motion toward each other, when the division lines which have run hither and thither, are disappearing, partition walls are crumbling and melting away, asperities are softening, mutual concessions are making, and fraternal feelings spreading; mighty voices are lifting up for union, great hearts are throbbing, and strong arms stretching forth for union. The sacramental host of God's elect, impelled by motives powerful as three worlds can present, are uniting their forces and marching abreast to meet the deadly foe, rallying at one standard, and striking hands for the crown; while the bow of promise is spanning the heavens, in which all the differents aspects of evangelical truth are blending into happy and harmonious union.

The various denominations coming up the hill upon all sides toward its sunlit summit, singing as they come, have approached so near each other that their songs seem louder and nearer, and their re-

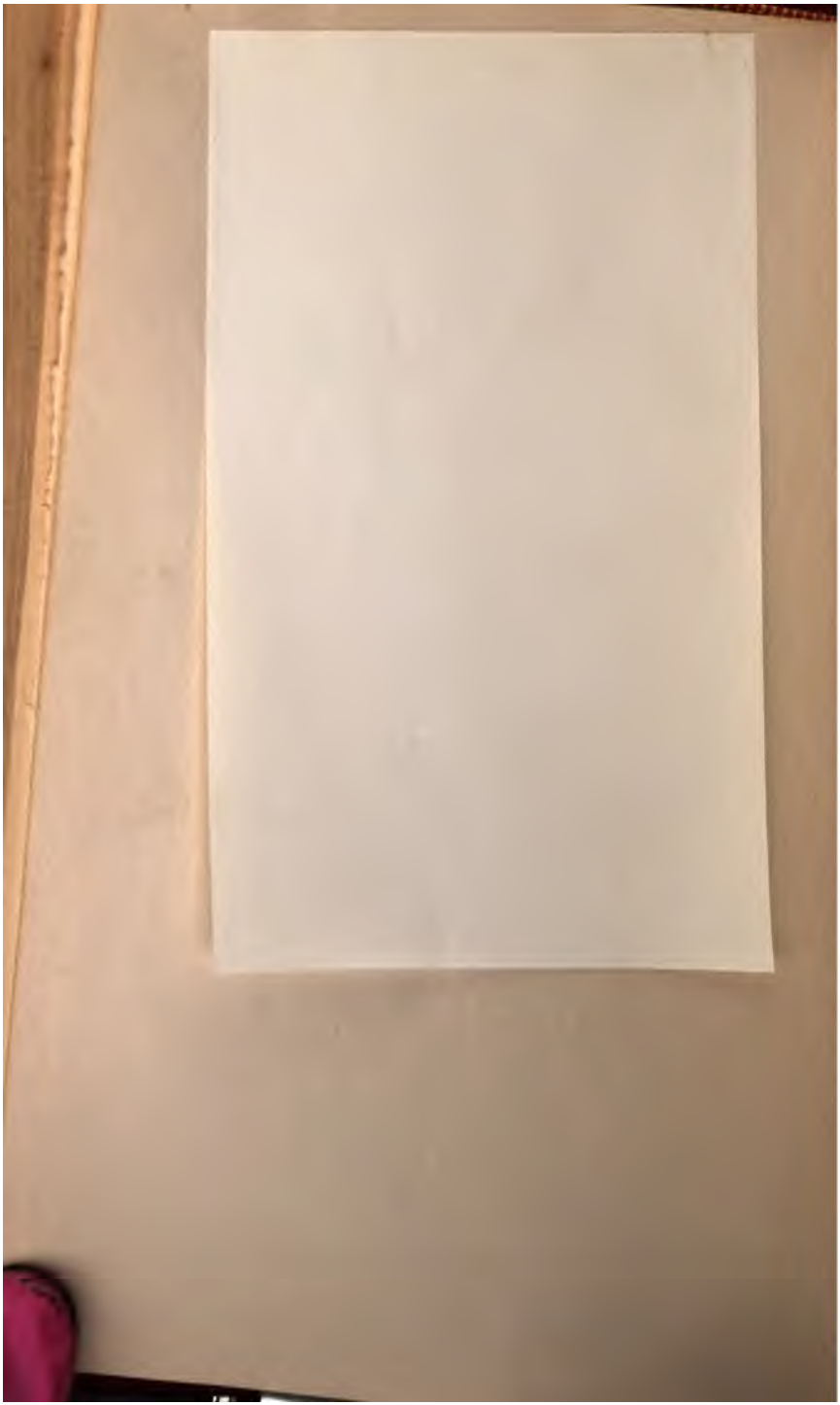
sponses more quick and glad. And ere the dial of the nineteenth century shall strike, and its sun sink behind the shadows of eternity, earth and heaven shall witness wonders the most sublime. The voice of Providence, speaking from amidst heaving nations, trembling thrones, and falling dynasties; the voice of enterprise with her thousand trumpet tongues, — thought kindling thought, invention provoking invention, reform treading upon the heel of reform; and the voice of judgment to come, which tells of no separation, save *one*, — all the solemn voices of time and eternity, — call the Christian church to unite her energies, and look out over the hills for the dawning of the light. Let us catch at heaven's altar this spirit. Let us place our united feet upon the rock, lift an eye to the goal, and with undivided hand strike at the foe and beckon the millennium. Let us go forth and help to build the temple of God, while no noise of the hammer or axe is heard in the work; and in the prosecution of this sublime work, let not a moment or talent or farthing be wasted.

God was not in the earthquake, the wind, or the hail-storm, but in the "still small voice." The great empire of childhood is silent, but in it dwell God and the human race. Let us aim to belong to it, for though silent and unseen in itself, it is destined to govern the world. In it, though out of sight, is to be found the secret spring which will move the hands upon the dial-plate, until they reach the noon of time.

Let us apply here our moving power. As for me,

I am ready to be offered up; not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem, if I can in any measure promote the cause for which I plead. Hail, Sabbath school — blest institution! Hail! scholars and teachers, parents and patrons! *All hail!*

END.



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